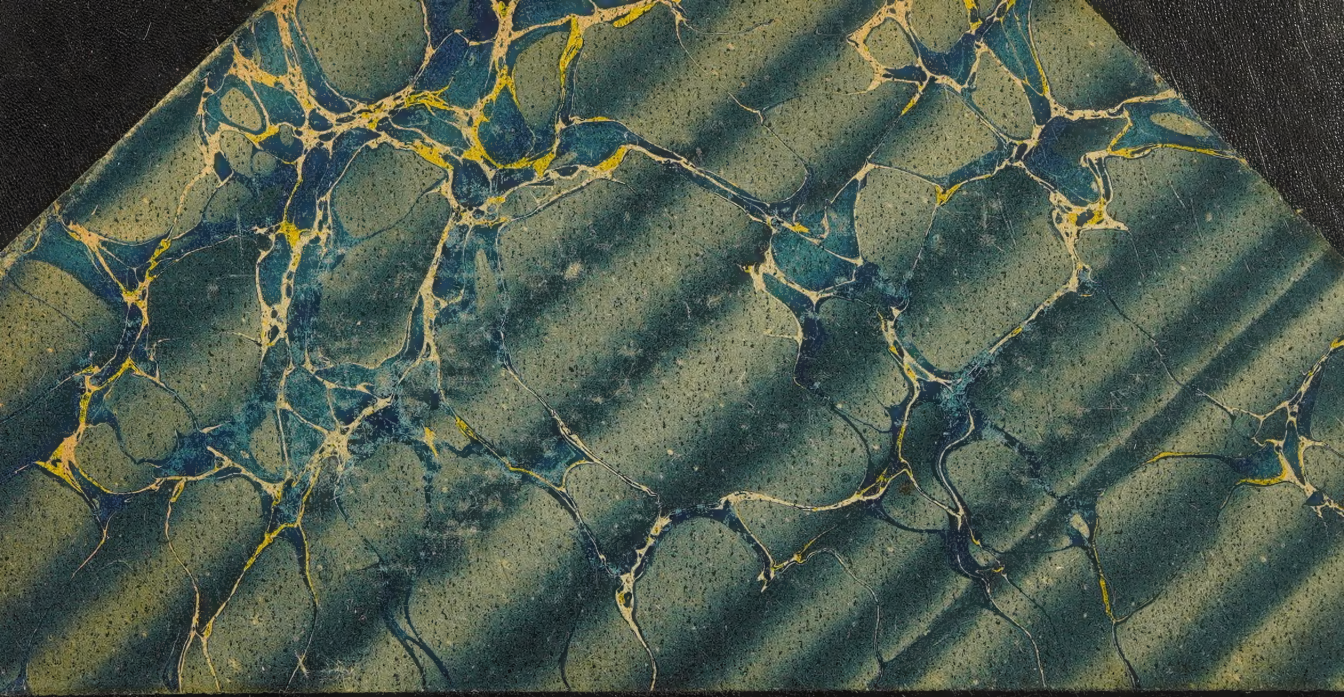

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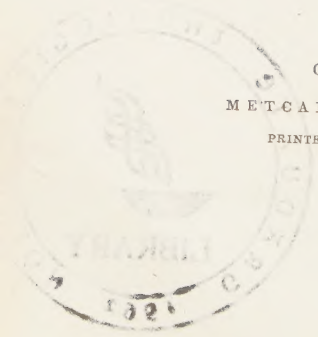

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ON

RELIGIOUS DECISION.

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ON RELIGIOUS DECISION.

WILL the reader of these pages be good enough to consider whether he would be included under the description of persons which follows?

The persons whom we have in view are nominally believers in Christianity. They are intelligent, and would recoil from violating any of the common moralities of life. They are commonly found either passively or actively on the side of good customs and institutions. In the ordinary social relations of life they are deserving of esteem and respect. They possess many high virtues, and from a union of intelligence and character are persons of influence in the community where they live. They are among those who are trusted and who are worthy of trust. Against that part of the character which appears to the world, not a word could be said. On the other hand, ask them as to their religious state, and they would say that it was in no respect what it ought to be. They respect religion, they will give money to promote its influence among others, but it has little personal hold on themselves. The idea of God — that great idea which should be the nearest and most controlling of all — is little present with them.

They have never taken any proper pains to ascertain what the great principles of religion are, and the truths of the Gospel, except indirectly, have little weight with them. Above all, they have never taken that decided stand on Christian ground, which in any true sense is the real beginning of a Christian life. They have never said, — "In the teachings of Christ I hear the voice of God." They have never said, — "Henceforth I put myself under his guidance. If the Infinite Goodness has condescended to give me instructions how to live, I will strive humbly, but faithfully, with a filial and submissive will, to learn and to obey. What Christ teaches shall be my light and law." They have never said, — "Henceforth, with God's help, I will be a follower of Christ. I take my stand on Christian ground, on that to live and to die. Come what may, I will endeavour to be a Christian."

The persons we are describing do not take this stand. They say, with respect to any action, "It is honorable," rather than "It is Christian." They are influenced more by the approval of men than by the hope of the approval of God. They halt, and hesitate, and doubt between the law of the world and the law of Christ. Such a man means, sometime, to be a Christian, but in the sadness of his heart he confesses, "I am not now a Christian."

This is the class of persons to which this tract is addressed; and if you who are reading it come under this description, will you not still read on and ponder the following suggestions?

The religious decision of which we speak implies that one voluntarily and unreservedly chooses Christ as his Master and Guide. This requires not only a determination of

the will to obey, but also clear and well-considered convictions respecting what our Saviour teaches. It would seem as if the former involved the latter. But it does not necessarily do so. Indeed, it is no uncommon thing for men of Christian feelings and purposes to have very indefinite views of Christian faith and duty. Even if Christ's words have guided them in the formation of some of their religious opinions, there are many great questions of duty which they have never, with any proper fidelity, examined in the light of his teachings. This neglect no one will defend. He who would obey Christ must come to some decision as to what the requirements are which he ought to obey.

In the first place, then, let us consider the importance and the best method of coming to a right decision respecting what Christ has taught, both for our faith and our practice. You who read these remarks, if you belong to the class we have supposed, nominally hold certain opinions. You probably accept or reject certain sectarian dogmas, according to their apparent reasonableness. But your views are vague, unsettled, and least of all have they been drawn from any sufficient examination, on your part, of the Gospels.

You are not satisfied with this state of mind. No one will more readily acknowledge than you, that if Almighty God has really stooped from heaven to enlighten us, if Jesus reveals from God himself the truths and duties which most concern us, it becomes us to bow and to listen in reverential thankfulness. To treat such communications with neglect is, you must admit, though often done unconsciously, to make a mock of God. When God speaks,

what are we that we venture to postpone the consideration of his commands, or to pay more respect to the communications of a man than to those of the Almighty! Do you not need to have more definite and better established views of Christian faith and duty? How, then, shall they be gained? The general answer would be, — From the study of Christ's teachings. But for the sake of making our remarks as practical as possible, we suggest a particular mode, easily within your power, and which will lead generally to satisfactory results.

In order not to make the work too extensive, we should at first confine our study to the Gospels. There is another reason. The Gospels contain the teachings of Christ in his own words. We have a right to suppose that he taught whatever is most essential for us to know; and, on the other hand, if there be any subject in regard to which he has said nothing, we may assume that he did not esteem it to be one about which any revelation was needed.

In the first place, read the Gospels as a whole, until your mind has in some degree taken in their general meaning and spirit.

After doing this, there will be various subjects of the greatest moment respecting which you will wish more distinct ideas. The character of God, what prepares man for his acceptance, on what grounds we may hope for the Divine forgiveness, the authority of Christ, the nature of the spiritual life, — on such topics you wish to know precisely what our Saviour taught.

Take, for example, the doctrine of prayer. Very likely your mind has been perplexed with difficulties in regard to it. Are you permitted to lift up your thoughts to the

Almighty? Will he regard the petitions of creatures weak and sinful as we are? May we hope for any answer? You desire to know what Christ taught. Take, then, the Gospels, and read them through with reference to this point. As you read, write down every thing in his words or example which bears upon it. After you have done this, sit down and examine what you have thus written, and see what the Christian doctrine of prayer really is. In this way you will come to a conclusion in which the mind will rest. You will feel that you have taken the right method to arrive at what Christ taught, and that it is one which a reverential Christian believer ought to take.

Do not be deterred by the seeming length of the work. If it should cost much time, it would be no objection; but it requires comparatively little. In the Bible lying before us, the Gospels do not occupy quite one hundred pages. The leisure hours of a few Sabbaths, faithfully devoted to this end, would accomplish what we propose.

We would urge the same course in relation to those doctrines in which you are interested through the controversies of the day. As a Christian believer, you wish to know what to think of the doctrine of the Trinity. Take again the four Gospels, and read them carefully through with reference to this subject, writing down every thing which seems to you to bear upon it, and having done this, from the whole mass of materials before you endeavour to determine whether you are, or are not, to regard Jesus Christ as the Supreme God, or as the Son of God, the Mediator between God and man.

The essential doctrines of religion are few in number, and the plan we propose is within the ability of any faith-

ful man. It may not enable you to settle all difficulties, but it will probably lead you in most cases to satisfactory conclusions. You will at least feel that you have done the best you can. You will have seen what our Saviour really said. Your faith will rest on his words. You will know what you believe and why you believe.

These cases are presented merely as illustrations of the best way of arriving at just and stable convictions respecting what Christ has taught. But all this is subordinate to something of still higher importance. We study the Gospels, not only to know, but to live. We would learn what Christ taught, that we may know how to govern the heart and the life. And this leads to the second and all-important point.

The first step for one who would be a Christian is to take his stand decidedly and unreservedly on Christian principle, resolved, with God's grace, by that to abide in heart and conduct, through evil and through good report. What is needed is a dedication of himself to God in Christ, — a dedication which will cause him, in all cases, first of all to ask, What would God here and now approve of my doing? The question should be constantly in your mind, — Situated as I am, "what wouldst thou have me to do"? Your appeal will be, not to what will be for your advantage, nor to the opinion of society, but to Christ's words and to God's approval.

Your life may in many things have been in harmony with the Christian law. It has been so, however, chiefly from accident and not from purpose, — because of early tastes implanted by others, from education and the general requirements of society. The obedience, limited and im-

perfect as it has been, has resulted from favoring circumstances, from the influence and demands of the society in which you live, rather than from your own deliberate choice. It has not been a matter of fixed and settled principle. What we urge is, *the personal choice* of God's law for your law, — *a self-consecration* to Christ and to God, — a consecration entire and unreserved.

It is not necessary to dwell on the reasons for taking this stand. We will only present one or two considerations.

1. Till you take this stand, you will not and ought not to be satisfied with yourself. It is the ground which one's own heart tells him he ought to take.

What is the highest conceivable privilege for a creature ignorant and frail as man? There can be none greater than to have the guidance of the Divine hand through the mazes of life. Perplexed with uncertainties and anxieties, what a privilege is mine, if God will condescend to teach me what to believe and what to do! And if He has thus condescended, what creature of the dust will say, — "I decline the guidance of the Almighty, and choose to take care of myself"? If there be a God such as we believe in, how can we think to have any permanent peace of mind except it be founded on his approval? What are we, when we defy the moral order of the universe? But let me as a trusting and obedient child seek the approval of God, let it be my faithful endeavour to walk in the way which he approves, and the thought of God will be the most blessed one which can visit me. My soul will be at peace with him. It will be in harmony with all that is good on earth and in heaven. Life will be illuminated with light from above, and death, which takes us into the nearer presence of God and of

Christ, may fill us with a trembling and reverential awe, but not with terror.

2. Till you take this stand, however correct your life may be in the main, you will find that there are parts of your character and conduct which are habitually at variance with the Divine requirements. You need to take this stand deliberately, in order that you may bring the whole of life under the Christian law. Till it is taken, though in many things you pay deference to this law, in other things you will obey a very different one. You will try to serve both God and Mammon. In some things you will ask what Christ teaches, and in other cases what public opinion or your worldly advantage requires. But God does not allow us to thrust into his throne, with authority equal to himself, our earthly passions and interests.

3. This unreserved consecration of the soul and life is essential to any growth of Christian character.

Surprise is often expressed, that persons, who in general mean to lead Christian lives, exhibit no advance in Christian character. They are no better now than they were ten years ago. The difficulty would very often be found to originate in this half consecration. If it be but in part, the reservation will be made in favor of some dear worldly interest, or habit, or sin. If the man on the whole mean to lead a Christian life, and make such a reservation, however unconsciously, he will soon find that there is the test place of his character. It is there that he neglects, evades, or directly violates the Christian law. His seasons of keenest self-reproach and remorse will be associated with that sin. He will at length feel painfully that there the question is whether he will, or will not, obey God. It is finally a ques-

tion of spiritual life and death. He must conquer the sin, and bring it under the Divine law, or the sin will conquer him. If he yields here, and finally comes to acquiesce in the sin, he will feel that God's law with him is not supreme. However it may be in ordinary cases, there is one sacrifice he will not make to Christian duty. Others may not know it, but he knows that there is one thing which he loves more than he either loves or fears God. And this sin, of which he is conscious, will chill his whole moral being. By the laws of the mind, from the mere love of consistency even, this permitted sin will gradually draw down the whole character towards its own level. There is but one course for him, and that is to surrender himself unreservedly to the Divine law, and to say, — "Though it require me to cut off the right hand, or pluck out the right eye, with God's help I will in this and all things else try to follow Christ."

4. There is one other reason, not only for taking this stand on Christian ground, but for taking it *avowedly*, to which we will refer, arising out of the influence which it has on others. The moral influence of a man depends on the law to which he is seen to appeal. It is needful for the good of others, if you are on the Christian side, that you should be seen to be so. It is not less important now than it was in the days of the Apostles. Suppose that the first believers in Ephesus, or Corinth, had said, — "We are convinced of the truth of the Gospel. We believe and we will endeavour to obey it in our lives. But we are ignorant and obscure men. If we avow the side we are on, we shall have no influence, and shall subject ourselves to misjudgment and persecution. We will be Christians in real-

ity, but will be silent." Had they done this, Christianity would have perished with the first generation. It would have disappeared, as streams which sink into desert sands. It was not more necessary that the Apostles should preach, than that their obscure converts should avow what side they were on, — on what ground they stood. By taking a decided stand, openly and avowedly, they became a centre of influence. They kept before the world the fact that there was such a thing as Christianity. And their influence extending in ever enlarging circles, the few believers soon became a great multitude, and the faith they held was established in the world.

And so now, if you would do any thing to spread the authority of Christianity, let it be seen that you adopt it practically for your guide, and appeal to it as the highest law.

Take a decided stand on Christian principle. If you believe the momentous truths of the Gospel, rejoice to be able to obey them. Put such questions as these to yourself. Am I gaining and using property in obedience to the Christian law? Is the course I am taking in business, in politics, or in the pleasures of life, one which will stand the test of the Gospel? Am I ready to make the sacrifices of inclination, ambition, or profit, which Christ, were he here, would require of me? Is my most anxious thought in the business of life to conduct myself so as to secure the Divine approval? These questions try the secrets of the soul. Happy is that man who can say, — "There is nothing I desire so much as the approval of God." He has already entered into the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and in him the everlasting life is begun.

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THE

ESSENTIAL IN CHRISTIANITY.

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THE ESSENTIAL IN CHRISTIANITY.

If we concede to Christianity the place which it claims among the means of spiritual culture, and the gifts of God to our world, we must desire to ascertain what is essential to its integrity as either a moral instrument, or an exhibition of the Divine love. It is so obvious that all which we find in the New Testament cannot bear this character, that every one involuntarily distinguishes between the essential and the incidental. There is almost the greatest possible difference in the decisions which have been reached on this point; but such difference, if it should be thought to prove the difficulty of the undertaking, also shows how ready men have been to recognize a distinction of the kind to which we allude. Some have included forms of expression or mere details of circumstance among the necessary constituents of the Gospel, while others have gone to the opposite extreme of considering only the spirit of Christ's teaching indispensable; but all agree in ascribing more importance to some part of the Christian records, and to some part of the Evangelical narratives, than to other parts.

The question has been much agitated, not only in our time, but in all ages, what is essential to Christianity. As

far back as we can go in the history of the Church, we find this to be the turning-point of the controversies which have prevailed. In the earliest times how fiercely did they rage! At a later period how large a space do they fill in the pages of the ecclesiastical historian! In our day, the sound of their confusion reaches us from every quarter. Examined carefully, we discover a common purpose which is at least claimed for them, namely, to determine the essential in Christianity.

Now it is not a little remarkable, that a very large part of these controversies have been designed to settle mere matters of doctrine. There have been sharp debates about forms of action or of organization; but the hottest strife has been waged on the field of theological belief. So common has the association become between belief and salvation, as if they alone stood in indissoluble relations to each other, that when the inquiry is raised concerning the essential in Christianity, every one seems to take it for granted that it refers to the character of the faith that must be cherished; — how much, and what, must be believed, — what are the limits of necessary dogmatic statement?

It is by no means creditable to the discernment of those who have accepted Christianity as a Divine gift, that they have so narrowed the ground of inquiry. To confine our examination into the essential in Christianity to a settlement of the articles which a man must incorporate into his creed, is as absurd as it would be for one to regard the number or size of the rooms of his dwelling as the only points which required a decision, leaving the nature of the foundation, the general plan of the structure, and the degree of finish, to be settled as might happen. Now it is important that the

arrangement of rooms should be such as to give the needful accommodation, but who would think of bestowing all his attention on this one point?

I propose to answer the question before us in what seems to me the right way. What is essential to Christianity? What could not be taken from it without removing something that belongs to its substance?

First, I reply, *a basis of historical fact.* On this the Apostle insists: — "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep; after that he was seen of James, then of all the apostles; and last of all, he was seen of me also." Here are positive statements of fact, and we observe what stress is laid on them by Paul. External, well-authenticated, notorious facts, — these he represents as the Gospel which he preached, and by which the Corinthian believers must be saved. How saved? By accepting them as facts, of course. This is not the whole of the reply that should be given to this pregnant question, for he adds to his enumeration of other particulars, "unless ye have believed in vain." Mere belief of outward events will not save a soul. But a belief of the outward events of the Saviour's

life is necessary as a foundation on which to build faith in his spiritual offices; nay, on which to build faith in the revelations which he made, as says the Apostle: —"If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." The visible, miraculous facts in the history of Jesus Christ are a part of Christianity; and an essential part. I know that this statement is impugned by some who hold the name of Christian, and whose right to that name, as it is not the duty, so it need not be the desire, and I am glad it is not within the power, of any mortal to decide. But that the history of our Lord belongs to the religion which he and his Apostles taught, is part and parcel of it, inseparable from it, needful to it, is as clear to my mind, as any thing that lies within the reach of human faculties. Not to recur again to the language of the Apostle just quoted, the manifest necessity of the case is a sufficient justification of this belief. Here is a teacher who professes to instruct men in the way of life, and his first declaration is that he was sent, specially chosen and sent by God for this purpose, and he appeals to the wonderful works which he performs in proof of such a Divine commission, and announces his own death and resurrection as a near confirmation of the truth which he utters. Is this a case like that of Socrates, or any other ancient sage, or modern oracle? The instruction of the Grecian or the German philosopher we may accept or reject according to its intrinsic merit, and on that alone; but here is one who claims for his teaching the further sanction of Divine inspiration and miraculous manifestation, whose earliest word of instruction is that God has felt such pity for the world that He has sent him, His dear Son, to suffer and die in behalf of guilty man. Why! this

is vital to the religion which he aims at establishing, — its primary truth, the very corner-stone of the Gospel. This is emphatically and particularly the "glad tidings"; and unless we receive this, we deprive the Gospel, not of a part of its authority alone, but of a part of its substance. We mutilate it. We not only deface the beautiful work of God and destroy the marks of its Divine origin; we actually remove an essential portion, and leave a broken and uncouth figure in its place, which has no self-support. We strike down the image that stood so firm where He from whose hand it came had placed it, and cast it into the dust, where any one may see what beauty he can in its shattered form, or may treat it with disdain as only worthy the attention of some curious student of the past. Yes; we need the miraculous facts of the New Testament as the historical basis, the indestructible support of Christianity; not a foreign or separate support, but composed of the same heavenly material, informed with the same Divine life.

Secondly, *the doctrinal instruction* which it contains is essential to Christianity. The Gospel offers certain truths, some of which it repeats from old time, and some of which it reveals now for the first time, and these truths constitute the doctrines of Christianity, which are a part of its substance and being. Such are the truths which it reiterates concerning the existence, government, and providence of God. Such are the affirmations which it makes respecting the sinfulness and destiny of man. Such are the revelations which it offers of Divine mercy and spiritual regeneration. I do not wish here to frame a creed or to define the doctrines which alone, but all of which, are essential to Christianity. Let each one do that for himself, under the light which may

shine upon his perusal of the New Testament. I only maintain that Christianity has its indispensable doctrines; to take away which is like taking out the heart or any vital organ from the human body. We reduce it at once to an inefficient, useless thing. Doctrines have sometimes been compared to the bones of the human skeleton, or to the framework of a building; and so far as this comparison indicates the relation of its doctrines to the rest of the Gospel, both as an original part and as the visible pressure, so to speak, within which all the rest is included, it is just. Yet I would prefer a statement that should more distinctly mark the living force of doctrines. Christian doctrines are Christian truths, and what is there in the religion of Christ more peculiar, or more intrinsic, than the truth which it promulgates? It is worthy of notice, when we find some persons disposed to decry the importance of faith in positive doctrines, that our Lord spake very differently. In reference to the purpose of his mission he said, — "For this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth"; and in reference to the effect of that mission his own words are, — "Sanctify them by thy truth; thy word" — not thy spirit or thine influence, but thy word — "is truth." Some men say it is no matter what we believe, so long as we lead pure lives; which is very much as if they should say, it is no matter what atmosphere we breathe, so long as we have a healthy respiration. The one is a condition of the other. Suppose, however, that it were so, or nearly so, — that a man might breathe any atmosphere with equal safety. Some air he must breathe. And that is the only point I am anxious now to establish; some doctrines must be believed. A

Christian must have some faith. What will his worship be, if he have not some belief concerning the Object of worship? "He that cometh to God must," at least, "believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." What sufficient motive will he have to sustain his goodness amidst the temptations of life, if he entertain no fixed opinions respecting the moral government under which he lives and the world towards which he is advancing? Let his creed be long or short, such as the church tells him is to be found in the Bible or what he draws thence himself, he must embrace certain truths, *which are his creed.* Of no consequence whether a man have settled his faith, provided his heart be right, and his life good! What! is it of no consequence whether we listen to Christ teaching us of the character and will of the Father, or turn a deaf ear to his exposition of Divine truth? Of no consequence whether we believe his words, provided only we copy his life? Would you be satisfied with the respect shown you by a child, or a pupil, who should pay little attention to what you said because he thought it sufficient to follow your example? Would the disciples have shown their reverence for Jesus, if they had turned away from the Sermon on the Mount because they thought it enough to mark his daily habits and cherish his holy spirit? Is not faith in a teacher's instruction a part of the deference which is due to him from those who profess to honor him? And did not Christ give doctrinal instruction? The doctrines of Christianity, whatever they be, we conclude, are essential.

But doctrines and facts are not the whole, for there is, thirdly, *a moral element* which is essential to Christianity. Christ came, not merely to manifest the Divine power in

miracle, and to promulgate Divine truth as an object of faith, but to establish a dominion over the wills and lives of men. Christianity aims at moral regeneration. It is a religion of precepts, as well as of doctrines; of principles, even more than of precepts. It contains the great disclosures of duty by which the world should be governed. It is throughout a moral law. Its truths are intended to work out moral results. Its supernatural facts are meant to sustain that confidence which shall issue in practical goodness. Morality, then, in the largest sense of the word, belongs to the design and plan of the Gospel. Christianity is a moral religion, — a religion for the guidance of human life, — a religion intended to form character and determine the social relations of men. It is a religion for the world's activity, and not for the individual's privacy alone; for the out-door life of man, and not for his secret consciousness only. Whatever belongs to action falls under the control of Christianity. Man's business, man's labor, man's recreation, man's home, all are included within the domain over which Christ extends his authority. Hence we say that Christianity has a moral element, which cannot be torn from it without destroying this whole Divine creation. As well might we separate the light and heat from the sun which gives them forth and still retain the sun in the firmament, as disjoin its moral purpose from Christianity and still have the Christianity of the New Testament. It is the attempt of a traitor or a maniac. It would be a fatal, if it were not an impracticable attempt. Here, again, we fall upon errors which men calling themselves Christians have placed in the way of faithful discipleship. They have taught, or seemed to teach, (as we noticed in the beginning,) that doctrine is

the essential thing, and have spoken in terms of censure or scorn of the "moral preaching" of those who have refused to discard from the Gospel one of its necessary parts. But the absurdity of this judgment appears, whether we bring it under the light of the New Testament, or examine it from the position which we take when considering the proper effects of the Gospel. Did not our Lord spend much of his time in teaching moral duties? Of the brief narratives which the Evangelists have given us, erase the ethical portion, and you curtail them of no inconsiderable part of their dimensions. If we turn to the Epistles of Paul and his fellow-apostles, we there find doctrinal exposition united with preceptive instruction, and the former made to suggest and enforce the latter. Whoever reads the Epistles to the Romans, the Corinthians, the Ephesians, or those addressed to the Galatian and the Hebrew Christians which bear so much of a doctrinal and argumentative character, — to say nothing of James, and Peter, and John, — must see what ample illustration of this remark they afford. The results of a faith such as Paul and his Master required — the proper effects, that is, of the Gospel — are character and life. But character is a moral result, and life is an exhibition of morality. Christianity, therefore, not only has a moral element, but this element is essential to it. We take it away, not only at our own peril, but to the destruction of the integrity of the Gospel and the annihilation of its legitimate effect and blessed design. We deny not that faith is indispensable to the Christian; far be from us a statement so false and dangerous. But not less important is the moral than the dogmatic element in our religion. They both belong there, and both are needed there. Both are essential.

Yet once more, however, there is *a spiritual influence* embodied in Christianity which is not less an original and inseparable part of its structure. The immediate purpose of Christianity is the awakening of a new life in the soul. It addresses itself not to the reason in the first instance, but to the conscience. Its first word is "repent." It seeks to change the sinner's heart, — to make him feel his need of truth, and to turn him upon the cultivation of personal goodness. This constitutes its spiritual purpose, and the consequence of its action on the soul exhibits its spiritual efficacy. Nor on the sinner alone does it act with a Divine energy, working in silence, but mightily; like God's breath in creation, when the void became a universe of worlds; like God's will in providence, by which the life and order of the creation are secretly but continually maintained. On him who has been created anew it acts with its holy influence, to encourage every good purpose and sustain every right effort. In the time of our weakness it becomes our strength; in the hour of temptation, our saviour; in the day of sorrow, our comfort. It leads us from an earthly hell to a present heaven. It is a Divine power within us, renewing, sanctifying, consoling, filling us with peace and hope, with joy and love. This is its action as a spiritual instrument. And hence we say that a spiritual influence is necessarily included in any complete view of Christianity. Our Lord said this, and most careful was he to prevent any misapprehension, like that to which the Jews were so prone, by which his religion should be thought to consist rather of doctrine and commandment than of life-giving force, or that allegiance to him consisted more in faith and outward obedience, than in the tone of sentiment which should pervade the

whole character and determine the habitual experience of the soul. "The words that I speak unto you," cried he, as if to guard against this error, "they are spirit and they are life." Sadly have some of his followers — some at least who have borne his name — disguised this part of his teaching, strangely misconstruing and mischievously disfiguring the Gospel which he delivered. Let a man believe all the doctrines of religion, natural and revealed; let him observe all the external proprieties of life; let him even walk according to the rules of outward service which Christ prescribed, if this were possible without sympathy with Jesus in mind and heart; let him have faith to remove mountains or scale heaven, and obedience, such as meets the eye, enough to win the admiration of all beholders; — if he "have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." If he have not recognized in Christianity a spiritual influence to which he has subjected his own soul, Jesus will not own him as a disciple. Christianity does not know him as one of the witnesses of its excellence. The spiritual influence of the Gospel is that which marks it as Divine, not less than its supernatural history, its positive truths, or its moral instruction. And if any should think that more clearly or more refulgently than either of these characteristics does its spiritual efficacy indicate its descent from Above, we need not set ourselves against such a persuasion, since we remember that the Apostle spoke of Christ as "made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption," and thus proclaimed the spiritual agencies which are enshrined in him as the representative of his religion.

Yet are all these necessary to the completeness of Chris-

tianity, — its historical basis, its doctrinal exposition, its moral instruction, and its spiritual influence. They are all essential, and whoever denies either of these, essentially, if not fatally, injures the religion of Jesus Christ.

And now, perhaps, we might go on, and show according to this test who are and who are not Christians, measuring those about us by the standard which, I doubt not, is the only true standard by which they could be judged. But this, as I have said, we neither need nor desire to do. It is better — nay, this is needful — that we examine ourselves by this exhibition of Christianity, and see if we deserve the name which we have taken upon ourselves. Are we Christians according to this test? Our duty is plain. Christianity has its essentials. This we must not forget. We have seen what they are. To them let us cling through all the changes of life and amidst all the fluctuations of opinion. It has its Divine history, — that let us receive and study; its positive doctrines, — those let us ascertain and believe; its moral teaching, — that let us understand and practise; its spiritual influence, — that let us welcome and cherish. Other things may be important, but these are essential. Other things may pass away, but these must remain. Many questions of interest arise, on which men may form different judgments without serious detriment; but in regard to the historical, the doctrinal, the moral, and the spiritual characteristics of the religion of the New Testament, as constituting the undeniable evidences of its divinity, and the indestructible elements of its power, there should be but one concurrent voice rising from all Christendom, — the grateful confession of every mouth, the joyful assent of every heart. Here may we find the union of believers, here

the strength and glory of the Church. Ecclesiastical organizations may perish, and prescriptive forms outlive their period of usefulness; but the essential in Christianity, that is immutable, the trust of man in all ages, the means of the world's redemption. Let us hold to the essential, and, whatever others may think or say of us, our inward experience will justify our immortal hope. Christ will own us as his disciples, and the Gospel have accomplished for us, and in us, its destined and blessed work.

SIN AND ITS PENALTIES.

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SIN AND ITS PENALTIES.

UNITARIANS have always differed, and still differ, in their views of future punishment. Some receive the doctrine of the eternity of future punishment. Others believe that it is reformatory, and that, having accomplished its end by reforming the sinner, it will then cease.

According to one of these theories, the future punishment of sin is what we may call vindictive, — that is, is inflicted not with any view to reformation or final benefit of the sufferer, but simply because an offence against the infinite and holy God deserves punishment, and must suffer it to satisfy the Divine justice. The other theory is, that all punishments for sin are ordained with a view to awaken and reform the sinner, and inflicted with the ultimate design and tendency to recall him to virtue and happiness.

There is no occasion now to discuss the comparative merits of these two theories. The object of this tract is to show that the doctrine that punishment is reformatory offers no impunity to sin. According to either theory, it is to be considered as a part of the object of punishment to warn and admonish men beforehand, to deter men by what they see others suffer, and by the threatenings of Scripture and

the natural forebodings of conscience deter them from wrong-doing, and save them from the necessity of punishment. According to either theory, the penalties attached to sin are to be regarded as indicating God's prohibition of sin, his displeasure against it, and vindicating the majesty of the moral law, — a law guarded by the dread sanctions of a righteous judgment, — a law from whose operation no soul of man is exempt, and whose enactments may never be violated with impunity.

It may seem to some, at first view, that this theory of punishment as reformatory divests the moral law of its salutary terrors, and, by making punishment a thing less dreadful and less to be feared than according to the other theory, removes one of the solemn warnings and strong barriers against sin. A man might be supposed to reason with himself thus: — "If all the punishment inflicted or to be inflicted on me is kindly meant to reform me, and if accordingly I shall always be at liberty to yield to its influence and let myself be reformed whenever I choose, and throw off the punishment by forsaking the sin, why then I can make sin a matter of *calculation;* I will indulge in such sin as I am strongly inclined to until I tire of it, or until the penalty waxes too severe, and then give it up, and become reconciled to God and his moral law. I can retrace my erring steps at some time; and God intends that I shall do so at some time, either in this life or somewhere in the progress of the eternal ages."

If this reasoning be sound, or such as the mind is likely to fall into and be satisfied with, then the idea of punishment as reformatory in its design is defective, and its warning and preventing influence is impaired. But is the rea-

soning sound or satisfactory? I answer, No. We will not go into a direct argument against it; but endeavour to meet it indirectly by considering what are the actual penalties of sin.

It is difficult to define those penalties. It is easier to dismiss the matter in the old-fashioned way, with a sweeping denunciation and vivid delineation of the semi-material horrors of an eternal hell to come, — far easier than to consider with careful inspection and fair discrimination the actual punishments of transgression, and the consequences to which sin obviously and surely tends in the future. It is easier, but not so just nor so profitable.

It is difficult, I say, to trace clearly the evils that flow from sin. For sin itself is very various. Moral offences are complicated. We include a great many things under that general name, *sin*. We give the name sometimes to actions, and sometimes to dispositions, — now to a visible course of life, and again to a secret state of the mind, — to things done, and things omitted to be done, or done less perfectly than might be, — to bad things done ignorantly, which yet have their penalties, and other things done thoughtlessly, and others still done wilfully. We know that circumstances do increase or lessen the guilt of wrong actions, in particular cases, and yet we cannot always measure the force or number of those circumstances. And then the penalties are not always easy to be identified as pertaining to particular sins; and extraneous circumstances are always occurring to suspend for a time the course of retribution, or else to hide it from the sight of observers or even from the consciousness of the offender himself. We cannot measure the degrees of guilt or the degrees of

punishment, in the numerous instances which occur around us. But we do come to some general conclusions on the subject of the evil and punishment of sin, which are clear and unquestionable, and which show too plainly that the way of transgressors is hard, and that the wise man will not commit sin upon a *calculation* of the good and evil fruits of it.

The penalties of sin are as various as sin itself. We can classify them but imperfectly, but must do it as we can.

In the first place, there is a class of sins that visit a part of their penalties upon the body. The sins that proceed from a want of self-denial and self-government, — the various vices of sensuality and self-indulgence, the passions that wear and tear the frame by their violence, and the moral apathy that lets it stagnate towards pain and death in a guilty sloth. The body takes part of the retribution of some sins. It is not the severest retribution, but it is not trivial. Look at it. You will not easily find many things that fill you with more disgust and dread than a human form shattered and tainted and brought near to perishing by the vices that prey upon the body. Sickness, pain, and decay, when brought by visitations of God upon the virtuous, we look upon with sympathy and respect, and then the sufferer can bear the trial with composure, often with cheerfulness, often refined and elevated by the discipline; but when it is the penalty of unrepented transgression, you may pity, but you must loathe the sight. And any man who has wasted and blasted his body by luxury and vice, if, in his hours of weariness or suffering and decline, he sends any serious thoughts backward, think you he recalls any thing in his experience that pays him for

that pain and ruin? He remembers gay scenes, and sights of revelry, the pleasures of festive excess, and the maddening exhilarations or stupid comforts of the solitary cup; but their charm is gone, he hates the remembrance of them, they cheated him to his destruction. They do not pay him for the anguish of a blighted existence, and the sense of a body designed, as Paul says, to be the goodly temple of the Holy Ghost, but made, through his folly and guilt, the abode of corruption, of pain unconsoled, and hope extinguished. The old and worn-out sensualist is among the most miserable of men; I will turn away from that picture of guilt and wretchedness. Paid for it by the pleasures of past years! — paid for it! — does any one imagine that? He will not say so, — you cannot conceive of his saying so. The boldest fiction cannot put such an answer into his mouth. Let no one fall into or pursue that class of sins, with any idea that his enjoyment will outweigh the coming punishment. Even the bodily punishment, which is but part of the penalty, outweighs the pleasure immeasurably. He is bereft of reason, — he is blind, mad, who should sin even against his mere body as a matter of calculation. It is not done upon calculation. It is done in thoughtlessness, or in passion, or in sturdy defiance of consequences.

In the second place, there are many kinds of sin which find a part of their retribution in the loss of reputation among men. Many of God's moral laws are such as men deem necessary to be observed for the well-being and happiness of society. Human enactments can enforce some of them, and some of them human law cannot reach or define. But he who violates that class of moral laws, commits that class of sins, suffers in some shape the condemnation and re-

proach of his fellow-men. I cannot enumerate these sins. They are all kinds of selfishness, all modes of falseness and dishonesty, all kinds of malignity of temper, all the habits and dispositions that show moral weakness or perversity. These things do in various ways and degrees hurt the reputation, the social position, of a man. It is a severe retribution. To be justly an object of aversion and distrust, to lose the confidence and esteem of those about us, to be pointed at as dangerous to deal with, to be considered a corrupting example, a burden or a nuisance to society, to miss the approving look and friendly greeting and confiding speech of neighbours, to be shunned, to know that a bad name follows us wherever we go, — all this, or any of it, is hard. One can bear this evil if he do not deserve it, for he has other resources in that case, and he can trust to time to clear away the cloud; but to deserve it, and have it, and feel it, — it is a punishment that presses hard. It galls, it embitters, the mind. It robs social life of its joys. It takes away things that are amongst the dearest to the heart of man, — respect, love, confidence. Sometimes it drives a man into reckless guilt, and sometimes fastens upon his countenance and his soul a lifelong depression and shamefacedness. Does any man commit those sins, and incur those penalties, upon calculation, balancing the advantages of the sin against the pains of the punishment? Very few, I think, do act on such a calculation. And those few do make a miserable mistake. Whether that penalty is deliberately or thoughtlessly incurred, it dreadfully outweighs all that is gained by the sin. Not pleasure, nor property, nor power, nor any earthly acquisition, can make good the hideous sacrifice of the respect and confidence

of the good. It is a punishment before which the bravest must cower, — a punishment that maddens or crushes the soul on which it is visited. It is a mistake to incur it. He who has incurred it, little or much, would tell us so, if we might ask him. Or, if he confess it not, the confession is stamped on his face, it sounds in his tones, it is traced in his path. He may clutch his gains with a miserly exultation, or pursue his pleasures with a delirium of excitement; but whenever he reflects, whenever he meets a neighbour, whenever trouble comes and the need of sympathy, in the loneliness to which contempt dooms him, in the chilliness of general distrust and disaffection, he feels that he is a punished man, and that the fires of that retribution do not go out, and will not let him alone.

Thirdly, there is a great variety of retributive experiences which we class loosely under the general name of remorse of conscience. Remorse follows sin. Remorse, — I will not try to define it precisely. It is various in form and degree, in different minds, but it is always punishment, a something that makes the soul see that its sin is a mistake, a loss, folly and guilt, that will dreadfully avenge itself. Remorse; — it is various, I say. Sometimes it is a sense of the precious and noble opportunities of existence thrown recklessly or heedlessly away, when it is felt that it is too late to recover them, or the strength to use them is lost by the enervation of sin.

Sometimes it pierces the sinner through the affections, when he considers the loving hearts that he has broken or distressed by his evil courses.

Sometimes it is the memory that it has armed with its stings, and it is agony to remember the good counsels given

in love, but slighted and fruitless till it seems too late to follow them, — it is agony to remember the good visions, and vows, and aspirations of ingenuous childhood and youth, all so fraught with confidence and courage once, but wasted, faded, and gone now, through delay, or weakness, or transgression, — gone and irrecoverable, seen now only through the fires of remorseful, deathless, but unavailing memory.

Sometimes this remorse is a vague but bitter sense of loss; some of the best faculties of the soul lost through sin; some of the best affections lost; the sweetest satisfactions of life lost; the best privileges of the past, the best joys of the present, the brightest hopes of the future, lost; the best elements of existence lost, and only its bitter dregs or its most fleeting gifts left to mock the mind with their empty consolations.

Sometimes it is a sense of degradation, of being debased and fallen, fallen from happy innocence, fallen from the height of brave resolution, — the affections tainted, the tastes depraved, with no heart for what is noble and good, the reason distorted, the desires corrupted, the will palsied, — the soul given over, crippled, and fettered to what is low and bad, — fallen from the high estate it once aspired to, and never quite lost sight of, — fallen, debased, — and the consciousness of it is as keen an anguish as human heart is capable of feeling.

Remorse, — sometimes it is intolerable shame, and sometimes brazen despair. Now it is a silent, sullen grief, and again it is the fury of an intolerable unrest. Sometimes it is an appalling sense of a holy and just God looking with dread displeasure into the guilty heart, and sometimes it is fear, a haunting, harrowing fear, — a fear of woes yet un-

revealed, except in the dim foreshadowings of an unquiet conscience, — the fearful looking for of the judgment to come.

But I cannot follow this scourge of the soul in all its myriad forms and guises. Doubtless we have all, in one way or another, in one degree or another, felt the touch of its lash and the smart of its flame enough to know that no sin has any pleasure or gain to offer to compensate the smallest of its inflictions. And the universal heart of the world testifies, in the records of history, and in the passing scenes of life, that the soul is capable, through sin, of kindling in itself a very hell of punishment, which all the pleasures of sin are but as a drop of water to quench or to mitigate. No man, who considers the nature and power and manifold operations of remorse, will ever sin, with hand or heart, upon calculation, — wilfully, thoughtlessly, weakly, he may, but upon calculation never.

I will not speak further of the present penalties of sin. Let these few and partial glimpses suffice. Let experience, and reason, and history, and the Bible tell the rest to each heart by itself.

It only remains for us to consider a class of apparent exceptions to the law of retribution. There are apparent exceptions, that go far to shake men's faith in that law, to make them doubt of the certainty or the severity of that law, — the sure and necessary connection between sin and suffering. The exceptions I refer to are of this sort.

There are persons who seem either to have been originally deficient in moral sensibilities, or else to have paralyzed them, blotted them out by sinful indulgences. They seem to have sinned away their consciences. Troubled by

no hauntings of remorse, they appear to go on, gay, reckless, triumphant. They seem to enjoy life up to the very end of it, to have ingeniously disengaged themselves from moral scruples and obligations, and to have found a sort of wild, care-for-nothing happiness in following their own inclinations. Through a certain prudence, or by a happy selection of vices, or some felicity of bodily constitution, they maintain health; and by their good fortune or their good-nature, — some popular qualities of a cheap and easy sort, — they stand in good repute, on a pleasant footing with all whose good-will they care for, — have their fair share of men's friendly esteem. Such persons seem to have been successful in exempting themselves from the law of moral retribution. Any high sense of duty, any high aspirations of virtue, which they may once have had, have become so deadened as to give them no annoyance. They can revel in their wealth, their pleasures, or their crimes, with a high average of enjoyment, and have not enough of their spiritual nature left to visit them with any sense of loss, any painful regrets, any keenness of self-reproach. So they live, either in a whirl of pleasurable excitements, or in the successful pursuits of wealth or ambition, or in a stolid philosophical indifference to moral excellence, to God's requirements and all noble things, without soul enough to miss any thing, to regret any thing, or to fear any thing. They have sinned it away by the sins of the hand or sins of the heart. They live as contentedly, and die as calmly, as the average of mankind.

I may have overdrawn the description, but it does cover a great variety of characters which are real, and are familiar to us all.

Now, what becomes of the law of retribution? It would seem that men can cast off their moral nature, give up the soul, and so release themselves from the alleged penalties of sin. They seem to escape those penalties here; and we are not compelled, by any thing in the nature of the case, or any thing we see about them, — are not compelled to suppose that they will be alive to those penalties of a moral and spiritual kind in another world. They seem incapable of that sort of suffering. They have not found salvation before death, it is true; but what harm is there in damnation, what is there to fear in it, to minds that have lost their moral sensibilities? They are not to be punished in mere vengeance; and how can they be reformed by punishments which they do not feel? What becomes of the retribution that the Scriptures assert so positively with regard to every soul that sinneth? Let us see whether, on the principle assumed in this objection, — admitting that somewhere in the ages of eternity every soul will find itself in such a spiritual condition as to be able to bless God for its existence, — this idea offers impunity to the sinner. Of course, all Christians, all rational men, hold that that final well-being must be of a moral and spiritual kind, that it must be the happiness of soul, moral, holy, spiritual. And if that be good doctrine, as it seems to me, what must be our inference with regard to the future history of those persons whom I have been describing, — persons who die sinful, unpunished, and unsaved, because conscience and spiritual feeling have become dormant in them through sin? The necessary inference is, that they are to be restored, that somewhere, in the lapse of the boundless ages, they are to recover those highest elements of their nature through which

alone they can finally be blessed. And through what process are they to be recovered? By punishment, by suffering, the Scriptures teach us, and the analogies of earth confirm the doctrine. Their moral sensibilities are to be reawakened through suffering, their highest energies aroused from deathlike palsy, and good affections and holy principles resume the ascendency through the restoring agency of suffering. The soul is not dead in them, but it sleepeth, and it must be restored. And we cannot think that that process of recovery can be a light, brief, and easy process. The recovery from a low and fallen moral state to a high one is always slow and painful. It is so in this life. To awake to the consciousness of a degraded and guilty condition, to feel the weakness of the will brought on by long-continued sin, to feel the loss of opportunities, to feel shame and self-reproach, the difficulty of the necessary efforts to recover, the bitterness of the sacrifice of things to which the heart has long been bound by passion and habit, the misery of frequent lapses and failures in the attempt to repent and change, to feel the spiritual destitution consequent on a misspent life, — all this is the severest suffering that is known in this life. That suffering is necessary for the renewal of the soul; it is for the soul's good; but it is punishment, it is retribution and anguish. While the sinful life was going on, before there was any thought of changing, the penalty may have been slight, scarcely felt; but the long and hard recovery, — there is the anguish!

The frozen limb suffered scarcely any thing in the process of freezing, nothing after the first chill, and it suffers nothing while it remains frozen. It is as it were dead. If it might remain frozen, it would never know pain. But it

must be restored. And then comes pain, — piercing, gnawing pain, — shooting like sharp darts along every fibre. The recovery, — there comes the long, hard agony!

And the soul of man may slide gently down the slope of sin, and lose and deaden itself in the gradual descent, till it seems to feel nothing, and may laugh at the very name of retribution. It may pass out of the world in that state; and if it could remain so, it might indeed escape the dread law. But it must be *recovered*. Somewhere, sometime, in the spiritual world, the process of restoration must begin. It is God's plan and purpose. He has the means. And then come the fearful retributions of sin. The dreary descent of ruin must be retraced by slow and painful steps. Then the fires of remorse must rage. All those feelings that have been deadened must be restored to quickness, the crushed affections must be resuscitated. The love of God and goodness must be kindled and carried forward, the soul renovated from a state of spiritual congelation and moral death.

We have no need to anticipate the infliction of any arbitrary or vindictive pains of punishment beyond the grave; the natural process of restoration, judging of it only by the feeble analogies and partial experiences of earth, is enough to justify the strongest language of Scripture concerning future punishment, and to awaken the most appalling apprehensions in the breast of the careless and unrepenting sinner.

It may have seemed to some that the doctrine of the final restoration of the souls of men to virtue and happiness is a lax doctrine, taking away the sanctions of the moral law, — that, because it does not leave an eternity of suffering, it leaves nothing, — that the long ages which it does leave for

suffering are nothing. I do not feel that it is lax doctrine. The doctrine of recovery lax, with the means and processes of suffering which are incident to it! Is there laxness in that? I wish there were, and that I could see it, that I might divest the subject of some portion of its horrors. But, truly, I do not know a more dreadful prospect for a guilty, dead, and unfeeling soul, dying and caring for nothing, regretting nothing, fearing nothing, and cannot conjure up any thing more dreadful to contemplate than that which, by reason and analogy as well as Scripture, it must suffer in the tremendous process of recovery.

Here I leave the subject. I have no fear that my doctrine will seem lax to any one who understands it as I do. Ponder it well, and you shall feel that the Scriptures raise no false alarm, and that the call to immediate repentance and a present salvation is not too strong, too earnest, too urgent, or too imperative. It is a fixed law, it is certain, it is unalterable, that tribulation and anguish must sooner or later come upon the soul that sinneth. Evade it for a time, put it off; but it must come. Every thing declares it. Experience declares it; reason and analogy declare it; the Bible declares it; the dying Christ declares it. It must come.

This is such a discussion as I love not to follow. We have been looking into hell. We have cast some dim glances over the edge of that horrible pit. I gladly leave the subject. Other themes are brighter, and of a better influence. Nevertheless, there is that retribution, present and to come. Let it arouse us; let it warn us; let it move us to seek, earnestly and betimes, the great salvation for which the Saviour died.

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SIN WRONGS THE SOUL.

THE nature and results of sin are among the most important, if not the most interesting, topics which can occupy the attention of men. And, unless I mistake, there is much error in our views respecting them, which causes the ways of God to man to appear unequal, and to some, even unjust. Having incorrect conceptions of the nature of action, they have incorrect ideas of the influence of action. They consider man as placed under arbitrary rules. The laws which he is commanded to obey, they consider as no laws. To their minds there is no natural connection between virtue and happiness, sin and suffering. As far as the soul is concerned, they think that an individual might as well do one thing as another; and were there no God to punish sin by his own direct and special infliction of stripes, it would be followed by no suffering whatever. They look upon all the requirements of the Gospel as made only to see whether men will disobey or not, regard or not, a divine command. Many seem to suppose that the requirements of the Gospel might as well have been something different, as what they are, man's nature still remaining the same; that there is no connection between them and man's nature. With such an

idea of the nature of action and of the Gospel, no wonder men have mistaken its influence, and denied its results, and their responsibility for them.

It will be my object, in this Tract, to explain the nature of sin and its results, — its effects upon the human soul, — and to raise a voice of warning against indulging in it. Uninviting as the subject may appear, it is of momentous interest, and I would ask of the reader a prayerful consideration of the remarks which I shall make.

The better to unfold my views upon this subject, I remark, that the Divine law is not an arbitrary law. It could not have been any other than it is, as addressed to moral beings possessing man's nature and placed in his condition. Man is endowed with a given nature; certain acts are suitable to that nature; a certain use of that nature is essential to its best good, its perfection. I will illustrate my view by a familiar example. Man has a body which requires for its growth and sustenance certain treatment and aliment. Deprive it of either, and it pines and dies. Now those who understand the nature and structure of the human system can give regulations, both regarding treatment and diet, founded upon the wants of the system, which its nature demands, which, if duly regarded, will give to it strength, and aid its growth, and protect it from disease. This every body understands. No one is so ignorant as to suppose that food is not essential to the very existence of the body. No one supposes that we eat merely to obey a command or gratify appetite, — to obey a command which has no connection with our existence and health; to gratify an appetite which does not, in its gratification, give strength to the system.

Every one understands that all the laws of bodily health and life are founded upon the nature of the body. If a person take poison into his system, he suffers, and perhaps dies; not, indeed, because his friend, who understood the nature of the body and the nature of the drug, told him of the result, and warned him against using it at the peril of his health or life. No. This was not the cause of his suffering and death. He would have suffered thus if no one had ever hinted to him the nature of the substance, or the result of taking it into his system. Ignorance of the result does not hinder the result. Being warned of the evil which a certain kind of diet or certain degree of exposure will produce does not produce that evil; it would have been produced had every human voice been silent as the grave.

Just so it is with the soul. The soul is so constituted, that certain acts will do it harm, certain indulgences will produce disease in it. These acts and indulgences, which are thus harmful to the soul, are made known to us by the teachings of nature, or revelation, or both united. He who knows the nature of the soul, and the consequences of abusing it, has in kindness told us what the results of violating the nature of the soul will be. His informing us of these results does not make them. They would have followed our actions had we been ignorant of them. An ignorance of the poisonous nature of a substance does not shield the body against its fearful ravages, if it be taken into the system; neither does an ignorance of the harmful nature of any immoral, irreligious indulgence prevent that harm from coming upon the soul in all its blighting influences. There are laws of the spirit as well as laws of the body; and a transgression of those laws through ignorance does not prevent the conse-

quences, the penalty, of their transgression from falling upon us. Nor, on the other hand, if we transgress them knowingly, is the information which has been communicated to us respecting the penalty of transgression the cause of the evil which results, or of the penalty. The evil and the good which result from our conduct are the consequences of regarding or disregarding the nature of the soul, its wants, its laws. So, the laws which God has given us in revelation for the soul's culture and perfection are only a transcript of the soul's nature and wants. They are not arbitrary commands, having no connection with the nature which is to obey them. They are founded upon, they grow out of, the nature of the human soul.

Such being most obviously the truth on this subject, let us look for a moment at the revelation which God has made of these laws. What is the Gospel? What are the precepts and the requirements of the Christian dispensation? I answer, the Gospel is a revelation of the soul's nature, laws, and wants. It teaches us what harms the soul, and warns us against it by revealing how great that harm is. It teaches us what benefits the soul, and invites us to seek it by revealing to us how great that benefit is. Is a command given in the Gospel to abstain from any thing? It is because that thing will do our souls harm; because the harm would come, whether we are warned of its coming or not, if we indulged in it. The command is given in kindness, that we may avoid the act, so that the evil may not follow. The fact that evil will result, the nature of that evil, and how great it is, are revealed to us in love, that we may avoid it. If we have already, through ignorance or perverseness, done our souls harm, the remedy is revealed, that we may be

healed. Like the requirements of a kind parent, the requirements of the Gospel are given because they are best for us; not merely, or chiefly, or in any degree, to see whether we will obey the giver or not. What parent would not reject with merited indignation the charge of laying commands upon his children, with severe penalties annexed, — disinheritance, banishment, — merely for the purpose of seeing whether they would obey or not? Who that should do it, could such a one be found, would not be considered as both cruel and unwise? But if we, being evil, know how to be kind and tender-hearted to our children, will the All-perfect and Spotless One, who is infinite in wisdom as he is boundless in love, be less kind and beneficent to us? I reject, then, utterly, the opinion, that there is no connection between the nature and wants of man and the Divine law under which he is placed; and contend that the things which we are required to do by the commands of God are the things which our natures require for their development and perfection; and that the things which we are forbidden by the Divine commands to do are things which would harm the soul if they were not avoided, — harm it with equal certainty, whether commanded or not to be avoided.

Our Heavenly Father knew the wants of the human soul, and he has told us, in his great mercy, what will harm and ruin, what will bless and perfect it. And these directions are contained in the Gospel. He knew how the harm already done might be repaired and the soul be healed; and the remedy is contained in the Gospel. If man had known the remedy himself, without a revelation, and would have applied it without the influence of the motives which revelation presents, there would have been no need of the

Saviour's mission. The making known the remedy does not make it efficacious. However known, it would have been efficacious if applied. Its efficacy inhered in itself, not in its publication. The prescription of the physician does not give his medicine its healing power; that inheres in the medicine itself. Had the sick man understood its nature, the advice of his medical friend would not have been needed.

The earthly father, when he gives his son his last, parting advice, as he grasps his hand on leaving the paternal roof, does not give him directions in regard to his future course of life for the purpose of testing his son's respect for himself. No, O, no! The father has a far different and far higher motive than that. He never even thinks of it. He has lived in the world and knows its temptations. He understands the conduct which will debase and destroy the character and reputation of a young man. He knows where the allurements are, and how frequent and strong they are; and hence, and thus, as he grasps for the last time the hand of his son, and invokes on his head God's blessing, he warns him of the peril and the ruin which follow evil-doing, and tells him what evil-doing is. So, also, our Heavenly Father has not sent us into the world with directions how to live, given to try our loyalty. His word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Wisdom lifts up her voice in the streets, and cries to us from the corners of the ways. The character of the Saviour is ever before us, lovely as goodness and attractive as holiness; and motives precious as salvation and alluring as heaven are beckoning us in the right way.

I have shown that the revelation of God's will is founded

upon man's nature and wants; that it does not make virtue nor sin, but reveals the nature and consequences of both. I now proceed to consider the result, the consequences, the penalty, of the transgression of the law of our nature as revealed in the Scriptures. He that sinneth wrongeth his soul. *Wrongeth his soul!* — this is the point. The wrong produced by sin, or the punishment of sin, or the evil results of sin, — call it by what name you please, — is harming the soul, injuring the spirit; just as violating any of the physical laws harms and injures the body. To sin is to wound our own natures, to abuse our own powers, to destroy our own capacities. The spirit needs careful training as well as the body. Unless the body be fed and protected, it will pine and die. Unless it be fed on proper food, it will become diseased, deformed, and loathsome. So with the spirit. It needs aliment, knowledge, regard to duty, uprightness of deportment, integrity of action, devout feeling, worship of God. The spirit is endowed with many faculties, and all must be regarded in the soul's culture, or it will be disfigured, deformed, diseased. There are susceptibilities to pleasure arising from a contemplation of beauty and harmony; and unless we are surrounded with what is beautiful and harmonious, the soul soon loses its power of appreciating and enjoying them; just as the delicacy of touch which the hand possesses will be turned into numbness, unless constantly called into action. The soul possesses a sense of rectitude; guilt and remorse are felt when its requirements are transgressed. But if no regard be had to this sense, if its remonstrances be rejected, its directions spurned, if we persevere in violating its requirements, and thus abuse it and wrong it, it will soon cease to remonstrate, it will soon cease to rebuke us when we go wrong.

Such is the general principle. Let us examine, with reference to it, some of the requirements of revelation. Is one commanded not to steal? It is because it is wrong to do so; because one wrongs his own soul, as well as his neighbour, when he does so. The command not to steal does not make theft wrong. It is wrong to take what is another's without his leave, whether we are forbidden or not in the Gospel to do so; and we seriously wound our own sense of rectitude when we do so. Are we commanded to speak the truth? It is not the command to be true which makes it wrong to be false. The command was given, because falsehood, duplicity, wrongs the soul, blinds our sense of rectitude, and thus destroys our only guide in avoiding what will injure and in seeking what will bless us. Is man commanded not to be profane? It is because profanity degrades and pollutes the heart, and was doing so when the command was given. Are envy, and malice, and revenge forbidden? It is because they make man savage, cruel, inhuman; they are coals of fire on the tenderest fibres of the heart, and were burning fiercely when the command was given. The pagan nations show by their debasement, that it is not because revelation forbids an act that it is injurious, — wrongs the soul. Sin was destroying the soul when the revelation was made; it was sinking the soul deep in darkness and death. Man was debased and degraded, and the message came from heaven to tell him how he became so, how he might avoid becoming so hereafter, and how he might repair the wrong he had already done his soul. Sin, by its very nature, wrongs the soul, for it is *abuse* of the soul. Can a man take living coals in his bosom and not be burned? Can a man cherish passion, and envy, and

revenge, and jealousy, and pride, and hatred, and not be harmed? Sin is an evil, because it is wronging the soul, and on this ground are all the commands and invitations of the Gospel founded. To violate a "law of the Spirit of life" is to expose the soul to moral death. It is the soul's injury that makes sin destructive, transgression a wrong; that makes spiritual realities so momentous; for spiritual evil will be revealed most clearly in the spiritual state. Here the body and merely material things may attract the attention, and divert the mind from its spiritual deformity and deadness. But when the body returns to dust, and the festive, dissipating resorts of life are left for ever, then the spiritual being, in its spiritual condition, will feel the vileness of deformity, — the chill of death. There, in that world where purity, beauty, goodness, love, worship, are the only subjects of thought and action, the corrupted soul, that feels no purity, sees no beauty, admires no goodness, warms with no love, renders no worship, will understand the blighting influence of sin and feel its sting; will know that sin is wronging the soul, quenching the flame by whose light it is to attain perfection.

There is one more view of the manner in which sin wrongs our souls, to which I wish to call the reader's attention. This wrong is as natural a result of sin as the one just mentioned, and arises from the same source, — the constitution of our nature, — though produced by another circumstance. I refer to our relations to our Maker. I have said that wrong-doing would harm the soul, whether we knew it would or did not know it. The child feels the pain of the wound, though it did not know that to put its hand in the flame would cause pain. But there is an additional pain,

grief, felt when it *knows* that such an act is wrong, when it has been *repeatedly* told that suffering would follow it, that harm would result from it, that it might render the hand useless the rest of life. This is the pain, the anguish, of having disobeyed authority, having disregarded the words of wisdom. This suffering must be added to what I have already considered as the natural results of sin. We have been cautioned in no formal, indifferent words against the evil of sin. Our Heavenly Father has spoken, and the Saviour has spoken to us in tones of entreaty and fearful words of admonition. We have been told that the wages of sin is *death;* that it brings ruin to the soul. Hence, when man finds his soul *lost*, will not the memory of his disregard of the Divine voice, the heavenly admonition, pierce him through with many sorrows? Will he not seek to hide himself from the pitying eye of that Father who sent his Son, and spared not his dearly-beloved, that man might be persuaded to escape the evil and cleave to the good, might know his duty and be incited to discharge it? Who does not know that the pangs of guilt, the stings of remorse, are keen and distressing in proportion to the opportunities which we have misimproved, the privileges which we have disregarded, the instructions and warnings which we have set at naught? The words of kind admonition and guidance will prove a savor of death unto death, if we do not heed them. The remembrance of having disregarded the teachings and warnings of the revelation which God has made to us will add to what I have called the natural consequences of sin; so that those who have been instructed from and invited to heaven in vain, who have possessed without using numerous and great opportunities of spiritual improvement, when called

from hence, will fly from the presence of their great Benefactor, stung with a sense of guilt, burning with shame and remorse.

If such be the nature of sin, such the cause of the suffering which follows it, we understand why it is spoken of as it is in the Scriptures. The wicked are not punished except by the natural and necessary consequences of their sins. God afflicts them with no scourges, no tortures. The only scourge which the wrong-doers feel is the one which their own deeds have knotted and their own hands wielded. Their sufferings are the natural results of their acts. Our Heavenly Father does not torture the wicked soul. It has spent its whole existence in nourishing passion and appetite, and will they not rage, like caged beasts, when denied their gratification, as they will be denied, by very necessity, in the spiritual world? The agony in Gethsemane, the touching and imploring cry from Calvary, teach us that our Heavenly Father would not that any should destroy themselves, but that all should turn and live. But we will not hear that cry, we will not be moved by that agony to forsake sin. Blessed with means to make us perfect, we disregard or abuse them. Surrounded with opportunities to aid us in our upward pilgrimage, we grope our way down to darkness and death. We persist in doing evil; we strive to violate God's law. And do we not wrong our own souls? Will not our spiritual natures suffer under such abuse? How deep, and dark, and deadly must be the shadows which gather over a spirit thus crushed, bruised, trampled upon! Can words exaggerate the awful end to which it is tending? How will the sinner bow himself under the burden of his guilt, and shrink from the shadow of his own deformed spirit, and startle at the

memory of his base deeds, and quail before the ghosts of departed opportunities, and draw back in view of lower depths of ignominy, and tremble and faint under the incessant rebukes of conscience, which wakes from its slumber with the strength of a giant, and writhe in agony as the fires of remorse shoot through the heart like the lightning through the cloud! The soul itself is hell. Its sufferings are in itself. It is self-wrought ruin. Heaven is innocent, God is good. Christ is witness, the cross, the garden, are witnesses, that the warning was given, the remedy provided. But man would not live. He would sow to the wind, and now is reaping the whirlwind. He would take fire to his bosom, and now he is burned. — God is good. The sin-ruined soul is witness; and its consciousness of this adds bitterness to its grief. Had one frown gathered on the Father's brow, the agony could be borne; but now unmixed pity gathers there, no rest is found for the rebellious spirit. — God is good. Sin brings suffering. Man ruins himself; his Maker's hand does not press him down from heaven; he has palsied his own arms and he cannot climb up thither.

Such is the nature of the harm done by sin. Such is the cause of the suffering which follows it. One other point remains to be noticed, and then we shall fully understand the wrong which sin does the soul. It is the *amount* of the evil, the *end* of sin's work. Let the reader give attention to this point, and I will leave him to his own thoughts.

The tendency of speculation in theology at the present day, with some, is to separate life and its fruits; to make action of little importance; to consider character and destiny as something distinct from each other; to think the condition of the soul is a gift, not an acquisition. Life and

the future are separated. To-day is supposed to be buried in oblivion when the sun is set. Life is supposed to be inclosed in the sepulchre with the body. Its tendencies and results are not supposed to be far-reaching and long-continued. Such is the theory of many; and more, who think differently, live as if they believed it. Men who believe that time takes hold on eternity live as if the night's darkness performed a moral bleachery in the soul; as if to-morrow's sun would find them as incorrupt as if they had not seethed their souls in sin, dyed them in guilt. They live as if a whole life spent in crushing the soul into the earth would do it no harm; as if, when the morning of the future life dawned upon the spirit, it would escape from the cerements of the tomb, pure, uncontaminated, in angel beauty and Christ-like perfectness. But this is not the doctrine which sound reason teaches; it is not the doctrine of revelation. This day's neglect renders a discharge of to-morrow's duty more difficult and arduous. This day's sloth makes to-morrow's toil more excessive. And the neglect continues to augment the difficulties of the way, till at last they descend upon the soul like an avalanche. There is no resisting their power; more easily could one resist the tidal wave. Life and destiny are connected. Such is Heaven's ordination. As well may one attempt to escape from his existence, as from the consequences of that existence. He lives; and if he lives his soul will bear the impress of his life.

"We shape ourselves the joy or fear
Of which the coming life is made,
And fill our future atmosphere
With sunshine or with shade.

> " There shall the soul around it call
> The shadows which it gathered here;
> And, painted on the eternal wall,
> The *past shall reappear*."

But I must be more particular. Man's soul was made for goodness, — to be perfected. Hence, he who perverts his powers to any other purpose *essentially* harms them. This is the simplest, plainest teaching of reason. Hence, he who to-day perverts the powers of his nature will find himself less able to act as he was designed to act when to-morrow comes. The illustrations already introduced, derived from our physical nature, make this perfectly plain. Exercise is essential to the health and vigor of the body. He who simply neglects it will find himself less able to endure fatigue when necessity requires it, when his condition in life is changed, and it becomes imperative upon him to be active. Thus it is with the soul. It has not been properly cultivated. Its powers have been permitted to lie dormant. The lower and earthly desires and powers, which are well in their place, and were designed to act a part in man's life, have been over-indulged. They are controlling, not subordinate, in their influence. The soul is thus essentially harmed. Its energies for good are crippled. It cannot rise in the hour of temptation with a conquering power. It is, to a certain extent, disabled. Its capacity, to a certain extent, is destroyed. It is partially ruined. Repeat this injury; continue to abuse the soul; let life be spent in the pursuit of any thing except life's great end, and how deep and dreadful would be the wrong done the soul? It will lay hold on death, not on eternal life.

Let us advance a step further. Every thing finite has

its limits of power, of course of endurance also. This power can be exhausted. Suppose, then, that one persists in his evil course. Suppose one continues to abuse his powers of virtuous action. Suppose he perseveres in crushing every upward aspiration, and thus deadening all the heaven-tending powers of the soul. Will not these powers become inefficient, these tendencies earthly? They have been harmed past the point of endurance. The soul is lost, its best life is gone. Nothing remains active but the selfish, proud, debased powers of the soul. How can this conclusion be avoided? Not by reasoning; for it is the result of the plainest reasoning imaginable. Not by Scripture; for its pages everywhere teach us that the soul *may* be *lost!* To persevere sufficiently long in abusing what is finite is to ruin it. This is the only result to which sound reason can lead us; and it is full of the profoundest significance to the sinning, unregenerate soul. A deep abyss yawns before him, down which he is hastening to unearthly night. Beware, my brother! Pause; let the feeble powers of virtue which yet remain be strengthened with watching, and prayer, and penitence. Fan the spark of virtuous sentiment which yet flickers in thy heart, with the breath of deep and thorough repentance, into a gentle flame, to guide thee back to the bright fields of light and purity, if thou mayest yet have strength to return from thy perilous descent towards the chambers of death. Can the sinning soul return, then, from its wanderings? Can it wipe out the stains of sin? Reason declares that it can, unless the power of returning has been so long neglected or abused as to be exhausted. Then, indeed, the case is hopeless. But what is the course which a reasonable being is to pursue, even if after a certain

amount of abuse and wrong done our souls we can commence a healing process, and cleanse the leprosy which had begun to spread its deadly loathsomeness over the spirit? Is it wisdom to abuse the soul because you may heal its wounds? Would you gash and bruise your body because a recuperative power exists within it, especially when it was uncertain whether the abuse might not be so great as to render this power inoperative? Is it well, reasonable, to join the shout of guilty excess, because its blight may be removed by the hot tears of guilt, remorse, grief, and repentance? Do reasonable men rush into an infected dwelling because medical appliances, if sought, will save their lives? Do reasonable people throng to cities visited with a plague, because some who have been exposed to the evil have been cured? Yet the peril of an entrance into an infected dwelling, the deadly power of a plague, are nothing, compared with the evil of sin, the leprosy of the soul. He who did not find strength to resist temptation before appetite had been indulged need not expect to find that he has derived moral power by indulgence. My brother, is thy moral power weak now? Dost thou think it will be more available when thou hast weakened it by further neglect or abuse? Thinkest thou that the passions which are now raging in thy bosom will be more quiet when they have been pampered by still further indulgence? Art thou better prepared for virtuous living by having abused thy power to be virtuous? Wilt thou be more likely to reform to-morrow by this day abusing and diminishing thy power to do so? And then who can tell but that thou hast already palsied irremediably thy power of reformation? When, in what point of the sinner's existence, this paralysis will take place,

reason does not teach. It leaves a dark, impenetrable cloud of uncertainty over the wrong-doer's path. It only teaches him that such a time *may* come; and that it *will* come whenever the soul has been so wronged that the recuperative energy with which it was endowed by its Maker is lost beyond recovery. Whenever this native elasticity of the soul is broken, then the soul is ruined! hope ceases! the work of destruction is done! Nothing but the most appalling shades are before the soul! The ghastly, deformed, debased spirit sinks deeper and deeper in ghastliness, deformity, debasement, and despair! This is reason; calm, sober reason. There is no mystery in the fact, that a soul that ruins itself is ruined. How could it be otherwise? What else can be the result? — There is, then, a fearful import in those declarations of Scripture respecting the end of sin, its fruits, its wages, — "everlasting destruction"; "banished from the presence of the Lord"; "those who would pass over cannot"; "there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth"; "the wages of sin is death." These declarations have a solemn significance when viewed in the light now suggested, — the light of sound reason, founded upon the nature and destiny of the soul and the consequence of abusing it

But the reader may press me still further, with the question, — Is this power of recovery from the evil of sin not retained after we enter another state? do we not carry it with us into another life? To this question reason gives no certain answer. Reason cannot decide when this power will be destroyed by our perseverance in wrong-doing; it can only teach us that in a certain period of the soul's existence, — whenever that period may be, — it may become inoperative. This is all that reason can teach. Revelation

opens the door of the future. The eye of God pierces the darkness which our eyes cannot penetrate, which spreads itself between this and the future life. And on this point revelation gives no encouragement. There is not a whisper that comes up to us from beyond the grave, that there is desire or power of repentance there. Not one solitary voice breaks from the eternal silence to tell us that there is hope. Not one cheering word is uttered to the sinning soul from the everlasting shades. Hope who may, when despair sits at the gate! Let who will think that he may leap the abyss, when the only voice which comes up to his ear says, — "*Those who would pass over cannot*"! Let those who will expect to enter, when it is written, — "*The door is shut*"! Let who will expect to be recognized by the Master, when the declaration is, — "*I know you not*"! Does the reader ask me, if it be not possible, beyond the grave, for the sinner to rescue his soul? I answer, God knoweth what is possible. What is real do we not know? and should not this knowledge satisfy us? The way of sin, the path of him who is abusing his soul, is all vocal with voices of warning; the chill of the spiritual death, the numbness of the soul's paralysis, is felt even here; and beyond the impenetrable veil which shuts the future from mortal vision, there is not heard a single voice of encouragement, a single whisper of hope: — the warm affections may be for ever congealed! If hope be there, it is not for man to know. If possibility of recovery be there, it is not for man to understand. God has not revealed it. Man should not expect it. But *here*, before the mysteries of the future are unveiled to the spirit; *here*, before the mortal eye is unsealed to behold eternal things, *here* there is hope; here there is rescue, if the an-

chor of faith, true practical faith, be cast beyond the veil before the arm is too palsied by sin to cast it there. I say, if it be done before the arm becomes too palsied; for even *here* this *may* be. The suicidal work *may* be finished, as far as man knows, even here. There are intimations in Scripture of the terribly destructive effects of sin, even in this life, to startle the sinning soul. Reason responds to the sad truth; and observation sometimes forces us to exclaim, — "There is no help! he is ruined!" Yet here I can speak a word of hope to the sinner. Here I can say to the bowed soul, stooping under its mountain burden of guilt and wickedness, mightier than the world, — Thou mayest throw it off; thou mayest yet stand erect; thou mayest divest thyself of worldliness and pride; thou mayest, by patient toil and prayerful effort, under the Divine blessing, awaken thy dormant powers, which do not yet sleep the sleep of death, thou mayest restrain and control those desires and passions which thou hast indulged to such excess, that they have driven thee to the very brink of ruin; thou mayest yet warm into a glow those pure affections and holy aspirations which are almost flint. Awake, then! slumber no more; sin no more. Lay hold on eternal life, and thus lift thyself up from the depths of destruction. Be devotedly, efficiently engaged in applying the healing balm to thy wounded spirit, in cherishing with prayerful watching thy abused and wronged affections and perverted capacities. There is hope for you. Deep and sad is thy fall, it is true. Guilt and sin are branded deeply on thy soul. Still, the fountain has a cleansing power, the balm has a healing virtue. Repentance, reformation, — these will lift thee up, by God's mercy. But they cannot restore the past; that is *lost*, *lost for ever!*

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PREACHING CHRIST.

"We preach not ourselves," said Paul, "but Christ Jesus the Lord." To preach Christ is the highest office of the Christian pulpit, — Christ, not the wisdom of man, but Christ, the wisdom of God. Preaching Christ truly is a powerful means of human salvation. We say, preaching Christ truly; and this is not merely to preach about Christ, — his rank, titles, and offices, — but it is, with the same mind that was in him, to unfold the truths, illustrate the duties, and enforce the sanctions of his Gospel. It is to set him forth in such terms as to make him felt as the Life and the Light of the world, and to awaken in the breasts of men such sentiments and purposes, such philanthropy and piety, as made him the Chief of the sons of God, the Well-beloved of the Father, and his express image. Any preaching of Christ which aims at less than this is defective. He must be exhibited, not as men's fancy or their vain philosophy has portrayed him, but simply as the New Testament describes him. And all he was and taught must be exhibited. Christ living as well as dying; Christ walking amongst men as well as "treading the wine-press alone"; Christ blessing

and healing by the breath of his lips and the touch of his hand, as well as announcing the penalty of ungodliness, and rebuking sin with the glance of his eye; Christ breathing peace and love, and stilling the storm of passion and grief, as well as enduring the agony of the garden and fainting under the burden of the cross; Christ, in all the aspects of his character and office, is the one constant, sufficient, boundless theme of the Christian pulpit.

There is some reason, we fear, for the complaint which is heard, that the pulpit has failed hitherto to take this comprehensive view of the subject. As we look back on its efforts in past generations and ages, how little does it seem to have aimed to lift the mind to the same point of observation from which Christ beheld the glory of the Father, and looked abroad on man and life; to mould the heart into the moral beauty and spiritual strength and nobleness which he manifested; to create in the soul an appetite for the same heavenly food which gave him nourishment, and a love of the same beneficent toil in which he sought for glory, honor, and immortality! How small exertion, compared with its efforts for other ends, does it appear to have used to make the spirit of his religion understood, and the law of his life obeyed! It has had enough to say about Christ, been zealous enough in urging sinners to go to him, — to flee to him for refuge from the wrath of God, from the crush of falling worlds, from the fire that is not quenched, — been confident enough in asserting that there is no other hope for man but in his atoning blood. But how poorly is this to preach him! What a one-sided idea does it give of his character! What an imperfect conception does it imply of the nature and object of his mission! How long must it be told, how often

reiterated before it will be understood, that Christ saves, not by an arbitrary exertion of power, not by stretching out a strong hand to men just plunging into the fiery depths of destruction and holding them back, not by interposing himself as a shield between the vengeance of God and the souls of his children, — by no such violent methods; but by the power of his truth, by the attraction of his life, by the lessons of his cross, by the influence of his spirit; thereby producing in his followers a will and aim, a spirit and life, corresponding to his own? This is salvation, its cause and its reality. Likeness to Christ is salvation. But this is very different from that salvation which is commonly believed in. It is redemption from no outward curse, rescue from the grasp of no giant evil spirit; but it is deliverance from sin, from the blighting influence of wicked passions, from the wrath which God kindles in the guilty conscience, from the burning hell of a soul that has received into itself the corruptions of the world, and bowed to its idolatries; it is redemption from these, and the restoration of the whole man to the calm self-direction, the strong but gentle virtue, the tender loving-kindness, the trustful piety, of the Son of God. Such, we conceive, is Christian redemption.

Taking this view, we fear there lies a just objection to the prevalent mode of preaching Christ, in the fact that it does not appreciate the magnitude of his office, nor the varieties of religious influence which properly belong to his life and character. Let us not be misunderstood. It does not, perhaps, underrate the grandeur of his mission; it ascribes to him a high position and authority, — the highest in the universe; it pays to him the homage of a profound veneration and gratitude; but yet it does not recognize in him all

that was manifested, does not regard *him* and his ever-flowing spiritual life, but only a fact or two of his external history, as instrumental and efficient in the work of salvation. It dwells on a few incidents of his wonderful story, separating them from the rest, instead of taking the whole, in that comprehensive unity from which flow strength and grace. Christ the atoning sacrifice, the victim offered for sin, with the pardon purchased by his blood, is its first thought, the theme of its highest wonder, the ground and substance of its most earnest appeal to the sinner's heart, almost the only aspect in which he is presented as a Saviour. Now, whether this special view be true or false, — and concerning this we do not here inquire, — our objection is that it is made so prominent as quite to overshadow and hide other views of him, which are, in our opinion, of very great importance. Hence we repeat, that we fear the prevalent mode of preaching Christ is defective from its failure to comprehend the greatness of his character and office. In order to derive the best influences from him, it is not enough that we call him by a high and holy name, even the highest and holiest; not enough that we regard one truth alone taught by him, however sublime in its nature; not enough that we eulogize one act alone done by him, however glorious in its consequences. No. We must study and understand *him*, in his entire manifestation; we must see the springs of his action; we must feel the might and majesty of his principles; we must sympathize with the spirit that made him proof against temptation, patient of toil, insult, and injury; calm even in his agony, full of love for man, even when man gnashed his teeth and cried, "Away with him, crucify him, crucify him!" In short, we must

know *him* truly and entirely, in order to *preach* him effectually and livingly.

But since, in the prevalent belief, the death of Christ holds the foremost place, — since his atoning blood is the chief ground of its reliance for the forgiveness of sin and final salvation, — and since the Scriptures frequently refer to his blood and the influence of his death, — it is proper, in the discussion of our subject, that we bestow some attention on this point. In what we have to say upon it, we would speak with becoming self-distrust, and as in the presence of our Master. We desire not to wound the religious sensibilities, or unnecessarily to disturb the religious associations, of our fellow-believers. We wish only to declare the truth as far as God may have revealed it to our understandings; and to do this we feel solemnly bound by our relations to Jesus Christ.

We begin our remarks, on this part of our subject, by referring to some of the facts connected with the moral nature and history of man. Amongst his moral wants, now and always, is the *assurance of Divine mercy*, — the *feeling that his sin may be forgiven*. This want has been felt deeply in all ages. It is one of the most striking facts which the history of our race exhibits. To obtain this assurance there is no effort, no degree of self-humiliation and torture, no method of atonement, which has not been tried. Such is the nature of the human soul that it cannot bear separation from its Divine Parent, cannot be content under the frowns of the Great Power on whom it depends; and though continually, through temptation and weakness, it consents to acts of hostility, yet as constantly, smarting under the penalty, it sighs for forgiveness. It is not natural

to man to be at variance with his Maker, and in arms against his authority. It is not natural for him to stand with face averted from the First Good and the First Fair. And when he falls into this awful condition, as he often does, he has no peace, no rest, nothing that seems like tranquillity, except in efforts to procure the pardon of his iniquity, and to regain his lost standing as a child of God. Hence the cries of the guilty heart, the groans of the burdened conscience, which have been everywhere heard. Hence the vast system of religious sacrifices, which had its origin in the first family of our race, and which has spread over all the earth. This want still exists. It is felt by all who transgress the Divine law. The deluges, and fires, and revolutions of the world have not destroyed it. Civilization, in its triumphant march, has neither overcome nor mitigated it. The boasted philosophies that have arisen from age to age have done nothing to comfort and satisfy it. And religion, with all its power, is scarcely adequate to the removal of it.

The system of sacrifices, we have said, grew out of this want; and we are now to trace, or rather to indicate, its connection with Christ, and the religion of which he is the author.

When Moses arose, in the name of the Lord, to give a more distinct form and constitution to the Theocracy of his nation, and to be the mediator of a covenant between Jehovah and that people, he found this system everywhere existing; and he adopted it into the plan of his government. His history informs us, that upon the delivery of the covenant he caused victims to be sacrificed; and that he took of their blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, —

"Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you." This was the act of ratification. Blood was its seal. Corresponding to this solemn act, when the New Covenant was about to be delivered into the hands of his disciples, the history of Jesus informs us that he took the cup, and said, — "This is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins." His own blood, thus symbolically represented, was the ratification of that covenant. As in the former case, so in this, blood was the seal. But there was this wide difference. The former covenant, having been intended only for a limited duration, and not fitted to make "the comers thereunto perfect," was ratified by the blood of a short-lived animal without moral life. The latter, on the contrary, as if to affirm both its perpetuity and its perfection, was sprinkled with the blood of a spotless and immortal being. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has strikingly exhibited this contrast. He teaches that the covenant of Moses, inasmuch as it related chiefly to an outward service, and was intended, in due time, to be superseded, needed no higher ratification than "the blood of goats and calves," whilst the covenant of Christ, being concerned chiefly with spiritual and heavenly things, being designed "to obtain eternal redemption for us," "to purge the conscience from dead works to serve the Living God," it was meet that the blood of Christ, "who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God," should confirm and seal it.

Now, in respect to the covenant of Moses, we ask the reader attentively to consider in what its real importance and value mainly consisted. Was it in the victim-blood which the lawgiver sprinkled upon the people and before

the altar when he delivered it? in some mysterious influence contained in that? Or was it not rather in what it was in itself, — in the laws it promulgated, the duties it enjoined, the promises it contained, the spirit it embodied and expressed? And the bloody offerings generally, which were made under the Mosaic dispensation, did their acceptance with Jehovah depend on any thing inherent in them? Had the mere effusion of the blood of a lamb or of a heifer any absolute moral worth in the Lord's sight? any power to reconcile a sinful soul to him? any virtue to purify a corrupted heart? any independent moral efficacy whatever? We cannot believe it. The object of these sacrifices undoubtedly was to call forth the religious sentiments, and to give outward expression to them. When they answered this end, when they excited right feelings towards God, then, and only then, they were acceptable to Him. Failing of this, they were an offence unto Him, worse than worthless, and his prophet asks in scorn, "To what purpose are they?"

It was not the mere blood, then, of the ancient sacrifices that procured the remission of sins. The value of those sacrifices consisted not in their intrinsic virtue, but solely in the spirit which they symbolized and tended to awaken. They were the Divinely approved form of denoting that state of the heart which is the invariable antecedent of remission and reconciliation. And the value of the Old Covenant consisted, not in the blood with which it was ratified, but in the nature of its obligations, — the character of its contents. The seal to a legal instrument is valuable on account of the instrument. It has no independent value.

If these remarks concerning the Old Testament are

founded in truth, they may assist us in forming a judgment on the analogous facts and language of the New Testament. When we would ascertain the terms, benefits, and results of the latter, our way is, not to seek them chiefly in its incidents, but to examine the instrument itself, to examine it minutely and thoroughly, to study it in the love of it, to endeavour to comprehend its life and power. This is the true method. For the value of this testament consists in what it teaches; in what it teaches of the Infinite Father and his relation to us; of the greatness, the worth, of the human soul; of Christ, our example, our guide, the author of our hope, the finisher of our faith, the unspotted image of Divine goodness; of duty, and its immortal recompenses; of unrepented sin, and its fearful woes; of a spiritual life; of a spiritual worship; and of a better world to come.

That this covenant was deemed worthy to be ratified by the blood of a sacrifice so exalted as that of the Son of God shows its inestimable importance, and should fill those who enjoy its advantages with the highest admiration, with the profoundest gratitude, and make the name of Jesus dear to them as their heart's richest treasure. And we are sure, that if there was any virtue at all in the ancient sacrifices, if the blood of a whole hecatomb could procure the pardon of a single sin, there was atoning virtue enough in the blood of Christ to take away all the sin of all the world! But, as far as we can perceive, the remission of sins, and the other benefits of Christ's mission, do not flow directly from his blood or death, but are the result of the influence of his entire revelation, including, as a substantive part of it, his own life and character; and all crowned, consummated, sealed, by the sublime and awful glories of the cross.

We have thus endeavoured to indicate the connection between the ancient system of sacrifices and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We have pointed out the correspondence and the difference between the solemnities which attended the delivery of the two covenants; and, in so doing, have shown a reason for the several references, in the New Testament, to Jesus as a sacrifice, and to the shedding of his blood. We pretend not to have fathomed the whole of this mystery. There may be other and more important views which at present lie hid from us. These, we trust, our minds will be ever open to receive, as it shall please God to reveal them. There are still other aspects of the death of our Saviour which deeply interest us, and to which we intend presently to refer.

But there is a question closely related, of some difficulty, which we here turn aside very briefly to notice. How is forgiveness possible? How is it possible that the effects of sin should be obliterated by repentance? This is the question. We would simply observe in reply, that forgiveness or remission, which are equivalent terms, does not necessarily imply the doing away of the effects of sin; and that when, upon repentance, the sense of guilt ceases to chastise the offender, and shame no longer crimsons his cheek at the thought of his transgression, when the remembrance of it, like some happy escape from peril, serves only to awaken gratitude to God for his mercy, then he has forgiveness. The dreadful penalty, worse to bear than the cruelest scourges of the body, — a thousand-fold worse, — is remitted, and the moral death it was working is changed to life and peace. This is remission. The criminal, who for many weary months has been confined in a gloomy cell,

visited by no friend, soothed by no voice of sympathy and affection, may by a course of good conduct obtain a pardon and be set free. But this will not give back to him the time which he has consumed in bitter sorrow and anguish, nor restore to him the drops of blood that have been wrung from his tortured heart. Nevertheless, the pardon will make him happy, — O, as happy as if all the gems of the earth were laid at his feet! So God's remission of our sins does not obliterate the remembrance of what has been already suffered on account of them, nor make up the sad loss in character and moral influence which they have caused. But it puts an end to the suffering. It brings quiet into the vexed and anxious breast. And it is the richest blessing to man this side the grave. For there is no joy like that which the guilty but penitent soul feels, when it first ventures to believe itself forgiven and reconciled to God. Gratitude, hope, trust, spring up where shame, fear, and terror reigned before. Over the dark and gloomy past an eternal veil is drawn, and the future spreads out radiant with beauty and good. Such is the nature, so great the gift, of Divine forgiveness.

We proceed now to some further observations concerning the death of Christ. And we refer, first, to the connection of his resurrection with that event. The resurrection of Jesus is the great fact of the Gospel. More than any thing else, apart from the character of Christ, it distinguishes Christianity. To die upon a cross was no unusual thing; although *such* a death as that of Jesus, in its moral features and influences, has never but once been seen. To be laid in the tomb of Joseph was no extraordinary circumstance. But that the dead one should rise up in that tomb, having

lain there three days; that he should rise up and lay aside his grave-clothes, and come forth and show himself alive to his friends, eating and drinking with them, and preparing them for his ascension; — this was extraordinary; this was the great fact, the most wonderful external fact connected with our religion. So transcendently important was it, in the view of one of the apostles, that he declared that "life and immortality were brought to light by it"; and that if it did not actually take place, since all else in the life of Jesus had foreshadowed it, then "all preaching of him was vain, and all faith in him vain also." Here, then, is one great fact, a fact of overwhelming interest, to which death was a necessary previous condition, and sufficient in itself, if there were no other reasons, to explain the voluntary submission of Jesus to death, which, if not wholly lost sight of in this aspect of it, seems to hold but an inferior place in that system of faith which regards the death of Christ chiefly as an act of atonement. That we have not overstated the importance of the death of Christ, as connected with his resurrection, is evident from his own words. "*I lay down my life*," said he, "*that I might take it again.* No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." And in one of those significant and comprehensive phrases, in which he often expresses the great peculiarity of his mission, he says, "I am the resurrection and the life!"

We refer, in the second place, to his death in connection with the fulfilment of prophecy. He died, among other reasons, for this, "that all things might be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning him." This is his own declaration, in

his own words. It was necessary that one revelation should sustain and confirm the other; that there should be no material discrepancies between them; that what was foretold in the former should be verified by the latter; that a chain of harmony should run through them, and bind them together in one book of life.

In the third place, Jesus died that he might give the strongest evidence of the love of God to man. "God commendeth his love to us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." "He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with him freely give us all things?" And when we remember what man was, and still is, where Christianity has not changed him, — how fallen, how corrupt, the lineaments of the heavenly image in him so faded as to be scarcely discernible, his passions and appetites raging uncontrolled, and life to him but a succession of opportunities for their indulgence, — and then when we think of Him who needeth nothing of man, who is perpetually served by spotless and immortal beings, selecting from all his offspring the one whom he calls "Best-beloved" and "Only-begotten," and sending him to be exposed to the insults and cruelties of wicked men, to be rejected as a deceiver, and reviled and crucified as a blasphemer, and all for man's redemption, — it seems in the nature of things impossible that a stronger evidence of Divine love could be given, and that no language can be extravagant in extolling it.

Once more, and this is a very important point, Jesus died as our example. Scripture says, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps." It was his example in sufferings that gave his apostles confi-

dence to go forth and preach his word in face of the bonds and afflictions that everywhere awaited them. They gloried in the partnership of his labors and trials, believing that the end would be immortal fellowship in his triumphs. Would Paul have held out with his firmness and constancy and fidelity, through good report and through evil report, in prison and at the stake, had there been no Calvary in his memory and heart? O, if Christianity owes its success in any degree to the patience and bravery of the apostles, if it owes any thing to that noble army of martyrs who confessed it and gloried in it amidst the flames of persecution, it owes all this to the example of Jesus on the cross! And not only these, but humbler disciples without number, have received from it the same inspiring influence. As they have watched in pain the waning lamp of their life, and waited with anxious hope the coming of Death, and at length fallen asleep beneath the touch of his hand, they have felt themselves supported and comforted by the dying of the Lord Jesus.

There is, moreover, a great practical lesson enforced by the death of Christ, — a lesson of duty. The cross of Jesus is a heavenly commandment to his followers to be ready, not only to do, but also to suffer, for the moral welfare of mankind. There it stands, in its simple and mournful grandeur, and, with the blood of redemption flowing from it, appeals to our sympathies, to our love of disinterested goodness, to our sense of right, to our hopes and to our fears. There it stands alone, in the centre of the world, and, with a voiceless but irresistible command, bids men "Be up and doing while it is day. Live for one another. Toil for one another. If need be, die for one another. Count all things

nothing, so that you may win Christ, and be found of him in peace." And, O, how fearfully does the flowing blood of Jesus rebuke the selfishness of men, — their cold indifference to each other's good, and the cruel wrongs which they inflict on one another! Let the Christian learn from his Master's death, that it is the highest excellence of a human being to be able to give himself up to the demands of a heavenly philanthropy. Sublime self-devotion! Who is sufficient for it? He alone in whom Christ has opened that well of water which springeth up into everlasting life; he alone whose mind and life have been consecrated to "be perfect as our Father who is in heaven is perfect." Still, before *all* to whom Jesus has been made known, his cross stands pleading with them, by the infinite mercies of God and by the all-suffering love of his Son, to subdue their selfish passions, and open their hearts and their hands to bless their fellow-men. This is the great practical duty enforced by the death of Christ. Let it be the one great lesson of the Christian's life, and obedience to it the paramount and abiding aim of his heart.

We now bring these remarks to a close. We have seen that there are views of the death of the Saviour authorized by Scripture, and full of interest, dignity, and power, which do not regard that event as an atonement, in the sense commonly understood by that word. These views, we have said, have failed to command the attention which the magnitude of their importance should have secured to them, in consequence of the overshadowing influence of the theory of vicarious atonement. But, although we have occupied so large a space in examining the subject of the death of Christ, yet the thought which we are most anxious to leave in the

minds of our readers is not that one view of the death of Christ, or another, is the true one, but that to preach his death, in any or all aspects of it, does by no means exhaust the idea of preaching *him;* that in *him* much more is included; that *he* is higher and greater than a dying martyr or an atoning sacrifice; that the glorious perfection of his life, and his exalted relation to the Father, are the facts which make his death particularly conspicuous, and constitute the essential peculiarity of his person; and that the only true preaching of him is that which faithfully sets forth his doctrine, his character, his spirit, his entire manifestation of himself to the world. Our motto is, — "All of Christ; the whole of Christianity." The true preacher lives *in* him, and so preaches *from* him. First "eating his flesh and drinking his blood," — incorporating him with his own nature, — he breathes forth his mind, the divine spirit of his truth and life. He unfolds the motives, principles, and sentiments which were the permanent quality of his being; and this he does in virtue of that intimate union with him by which alone a full participation of his power and grace is reached. Whosoever, by speech and life, or by life alone, recommends the virtues which Jesus enjoined, and enforces in his name the obligations of the two great commandments, — of that piety which consists of faith and worship, of that philanthropy which consists of love to man and efforts for his good, — preaches much of Christ. With Paul, to reason of righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come; with Peter, to inculcate the baptism of repentance for the remission of sin; with James, to maintain the necessity of good works; with John, to insist on a pure, fervent, spiritual worship of the Father, and of the Father only, is to

preach much of Christ. To contend bravely against the impiety, the inhumanity, the crimes of the world, to engage with vigor and zeal, and in a Christian spirit, in enterprises of benevolence and mercy, — in efforts for the elevation of the poor, for the moral improvement of the criminal, for the redemption of the enslaved, for the diffusion of Christianity over the benighted regions of the earth, and the enlargement of the empire of righteousness, freedom, and peace, — is to preach much of Christ. He is preached not alone in pulpits and magnificent temples, but often with more effect in lowly habitations, where religion erects her throne, and God is worshipped, and man is loved, and the prophecy of a better time coming makes music and gladness. He is preached in the silent meeting of the Quaker, where the spirit of holiness and peace fills all hearts, as worthily as in the sounding aisles of the church where the voice of prayer and the hymn of thanksgiving are heard. He is preached as eloquently by the Christian writings and humane labors of a Wilberforce, a Clarkson, and an Elizabeth Fry, on whom no "hands of the presbytery" were ever laid, as by the fervent discourses of a Robert Hall, a Channing, and a Chalmers.

We conclude by exhorting all who may read these pages to take Christ, in his total manifestation, as the representative and source of their faith and virtue, of their inward life and hope; to erect themselves on him as a foundation into a building of God, which no stream of time, though beating never so vehemently, can shake; to regard every word that fell from his lips as sacred, omitting not the least, and fulfilling the greatest, of the commandments; to call nothing common or unclean, doubtful or trivial, that bears his name

and seal. For nothing is little, nothing insignificant, that he said, or did, or approved. That which was of no worth before becomes of great value when his hand has touched and his prayer blessed it. A cup of cold water given to the thirsting in his name is changed into a perennial fountain of inward blessedness. The two farthings of the widow become durable riches and righteousness. The bread and wine of the Supper are converted into a spiritual presence of the Redeemer. The grave, that place of darkness, dust, and silence, is transformed into a bright and crowded pathway to a better world. Let us, then, turn away from all systems of men, by whomsoever proposed or defended, from all arts and devices to obtain that "grace of God which bringeth salvation," and look only to him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Let us ponder his words; let us ponder his works; let us pray for his spirit; let us seek to be one with him as he was one with the Father.

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UNION WITH GOD AND MAN.

The last prayer of our Saviour for his followers was, — "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." "*To be made perfect in one*" — one with God and one with each other — is the perfection and happiness of mankind. An ultimate aim of Christianity, accordingly, is union, harmony, love. Instead of the present ceaseless war of man upon man, the selfish strife of sects and parties, the worrying competition of business, the hostility of castes and classes, the grinding and crushing of city against city, and country against country, it proposes peace, — peace in the family, in the church, in the neighbourhood, in the nation, and between the nations. So towards the Eternal Majesty of heaven, instead of the distance and coldness of strangers or the stubbornness of enemies, it would give the confidence and delightful ease of children in a father's house, so that we may feel God's world is man's home, and live before the Highest in a holy and affectionate spirit of friendship. And the Gospel will not accomplish its blessed mission to man until it

shall have established this brotherhood of the species, this childhood of man to God, and this fatherhood of God to man, not as splendid theories, but as living, practical realities.

"That they may be made perfect in one," are words written all over *the works of God*. They contain a profound philosophy, as well as indicate a perfect religion. Union is the law of universal nature, and disunion the exception; and disunion takes place only that there may be a more perfect union. It is the composition of seven different colors that makes the absolute light. It is the mixture of three diverse gases that produces the vital air; and of two, that gives us the vital water. It is the congeries of the discordant materials which science analyzes and classifies that constitutes the round and revolving earth. And what is true of the so-called elements also holds good of all the various objects of matter; not one but is a union, a composition, an agreement. And when this union is broken, it is only a temporary transition to a new and better union; even matter itself for ever rising on an ascending scale of progress, until, instead of the original chaos, we now behold a beautiful and inhabited globe.

This magnificent law of God is in force and manifestation beyond our little globe. It is inscribed on the stars of the firmament, and chanted in the music of the spheres. Orbit circling within orbit and system within system, above, below, and on either hand, the mystic dance of worlds, ten thousand times ten thousand mighty globes in swiftest motion, but in perfect method, crossing and recrossing one another's path without collision, testify to the sublime union of the material and visible universe. Even

the seemingly lawless meteors and the erratic comets are but more dazzling demonstrations of the same eternal truth.

It is said by some one, that all nature is at war; but it is a superficial remark. More truly may we say, all nature is at peace, and her seeming conflict is but the condition of a more absolute harmony, and her very variety makes the real universe. It is differing notes in music that constitute the perfect melody; and the endless changes, revolutions, and, to our dull ears, discords of the creation are in truth a more concordant anthem of praise to the Creator.

> "All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
> All chance, direction which thou canst not see;
> All discord, harmony not understood:
> All partial evil, universal good."

And could we read *the moral* as clearly as we can the physical creation, we should no doubt see the same law, if not the same fact, in every part of its complicated web. We should know that evil and good, light and darkness, misery and happiness, were as essential and unavoidable in a world of free moral, accountable, and improvable agents, as the changes of matter and the compensations of growth and decay, combination and dissolution, from a glow-worm to a planet. At least, we cannot get away from one fact. It is the world of God. He made it, and not we ourselves. He created its beings, established its laws, and foresaw, if he did not predestinate, its evil and its good. But we must not judge the architect's work half done. We must "the great issue wait," and not suppose, that, because we see trouble to-day, we see the character and meaning of the whole unbounded plan of our Heavenly Father. For it is

but a minute arc of the circle of eternity, crooked, indeed, and unsightly to the mole eye of man, but harmony and beauty itself to the all-comprehending Mind.

In fact, *the theory of Christianity* agrees perfectly with this view, and *the specific teachings* of our Lord corroborate it. What we know not now, we are to know hereafter. The tares cannot be pulled out from among the wheat until the harvest. The very Prince of Peace came to send forth on the earth a temporary sword, a transition-fire, to make way for a more entire union of soul with soul, and of the finite with the Infinite. The old stubble must be burnt up, to prepare the soil for a new and more abundant increase. The Church itself would prove a cause of contention for the time being, and Christianity a question of dispute, but only that in the end they might fulfil the conditions of a more lasting peace. The probe and the knife must precede the perfect cure. The religion that was cradled amid crucifixions and martyrdoms could not grow to its complete maturity in the earth without its Inquisitions and Smithfields. Thus unity of faith, and even of opinions, has a meaning, if we would reverently heed it. Men struggle to be at one, not only in feeling but in doctrine. They break the peace for peace' sake. He must have read the history of the Christian Church to little good purpose, who does not see that its strifes have a deeper meaning than mere strife; and that, with clangor of hammer and saw, — with the splitting, cutting, and fashioning of this celestial, as of our familiar earthly architecture, — the world has been seeking, almost unconsciously to itself, to frame and build the harmonious temple of Christ.

The final issue, whatever may come between, is revealed

by the Master, — "that they may be made perfect in one." This union and perfection of religion, so illustrated by the works and so confirmed by the word of God, has two natural branches.

The final end of the Gospel is to make man one with God. The great work of Christ was to bring about this union. He was the medium of communication between heaven and earth, the Mediator between God and man, standing midway, like the angel in the beautiful design of the sculptor, who is pointing, with upward finger, the wondering infant, released from earth, to a brighter world on high. The religious acts our Saviour inculcated all subserved this main purpose. Did he teach repentance, faith, love, obedience, gratitude, prayer? They were the means and instrumentalities of removing the barriers to the perfect union; they were the filaments to weave a stronger and more incorruptible bond of harmony.

This state of perfect reconciliation with the Father of our spirits and Dispenser of our lot has been the aspiration and effort of the good and wise in the past, "the sacramental host of God." Indeed, more attention has been given to this side of religion, piety, than to the other side, morality. The exertion has been to be just *with* God more than to be just *to* man.

But a profound want of our nature is met by union with God. We find nothing mystical or absurd in the sympathy of heart with heart; why should we in the concord of the humblest mind on earth with the Great Spirit? And if new light and power flow from the interchange of thought with thought, and intercourse among men, then how much greater must be the benefit to the ignorant and erring child of the

earth to be brought into a living union with the Supreme Mind! The very term *religion*, as some derive it, signifies this *binding again* of the soul, that has drifted away from God, to its eternal strength. For life away from him is, in reality, not life, but a species of death. Not to know and love him is not to know and love truly any thing he has made, not even ourselves. Our very self-love will be actual self-hatred and self-ruin, unless the blessing of this higher relationship be recognized and sought.

Observe, this must be a living union; not a traditional and legendary conversion, effected many years ago, — our Christian character justifying itself by that single transaction, — but an ever-renewed alliance and good understanding; the most lively sorrow following every fall from the high estate of this divine intimacy. To-day, if we will, we may hear God in the rushing rain, and see him in the bountiful harvest. This present moment in which we dwell is full of Him. Earth, and air, and ocean cover our board with royal generosity, and the mighty sun has spent the summer in ripening our dessert. If the lowest things of life have tongues thus to speak to us of the All-surrounding Love, what shall we say of the highest, — of thought and fancy and feeling, — of art and science and literature, — of government, laws, and morals, — of the Holy Scriptures and the Gospel of Jesus Christ? The whole creation, physical, mental, and spiritual, has in truth been constructed to bring us into contact with God at every point, to impart to the mind the light, and to pour into the heart the life, of this blessed union.

Consider its honor. This co-working with God, as dear children, is the chief privilege of man. What folly, what

insanity, that we should so often and willingly forfeit it by our sins! There is no pride nor haughtiness with the Most High. He condescends to an infant as to a Socrates, and abides with all his glory equally in the cottage or the palace which is opened to him. He has made man, as it were, a humble image of himself, a miniature of the Infinite. He calls upon his child to resemble him by choice, as he is formed to resemble him by creation; and to grow, as he has been made, in the divine life and similitude. He has thus imparted to man even a portion of his own creative power, and the satisfaction of being in part self-made.

By a true and close union with our Father in heaven, we are not lost in him, absorbed, and deprived of the consciousness and identity of our being; but it is in this manner we truly find our life, and come to ourselves; it is thus that the meek, the spiritually-minded, own and enjoy all things, enter into possession of the whole universe, inherit earth, and inherit heaven; while he who is out of God and this filial oneness, however rich he may seem to be, has nothing, is disinherited of all, because he is not rich towards God. Every thing refuses its use to him, because he does not use and enjoy all in God. "His riches are corrupted, his garments moth-eaten, his gold and silver cankered."

When we separate ourselves from the central Mind and Heart of the creation, we put ourselves into false relations with all things and beings; but when we maintain an unbroken communion of worship, love, and obedience, we place ourselves in such a conjunction that all things work together for our good, and none for our ill; the least swell into generous bounties, and the hardest soften into parental benedictions; — yea, pain and grief have sweet uses to the child of God.

And when something worse comes, when the foul blot of sin threatens to eclipse the light of the soul for ever, how does this forgiving Parent meet us a great way off, even in our earliest compunctions and penitence, and give us no reluctant welcome home, but say, "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found"! O the mercy and long-suffering of God! Eternity will be too short to understand the instances of his care, and to sum up the multitude of his kindnesses.

Let us set about making this filial union a most practical and daily business of our lives. It is one of the greatest ends for which we have our lives given and preserved. God is a spirit; but so are our friends spirits. That characteristic is no bar to our sympathy with them; indeed, it is its very foundation. We can talk to them. But we can hold the higher conversation of prayer with the Heavenly Friend. They can answer us. True; and poor and imperfect enough their answers often are, — smiles on false cheeks, — perhaps tears from fond, but foolish eyes, — half-stammered meanings of the soul, at the best. But the answers of God are great words of providence and grace, that we never can wholly forget or mistake, because they are always perfectly true and sincere. They are cherubim, standing in the sun; crosses, inscribed with encouraging mottos, on the sky; bushes, burning with a divine, but unconsuming flame; now the birth-angel and now the death-angel crossing the threshold of our home; new influxes of light and new visitings of love. God speaks to us with such words as these. Have we failed to study even the alphabet of that language which makes them as articulate to us as our vernacular tongue?

Union with God! He in us, and we in him, through his Son and his spirit! He in us by his fulness of temporal good and spiritual blessing; we in him by our contented dependence and unquestioning love! We will see him in all things, and all things in him. We will hear him in the bird of spring and the fall of the autumn leaf. He condescends from his infinite heavens to dwell in the souls of his children. We will arise from our low and worldly life, from the dark places where we shut out from us the pure light and joy of the spirit-world, and enter into union with God, even with our God.

But thus far only the half has been said; the other privilege and duty of our being is *union with man.* "Perfect in one" applies to men with men, as to all men with God.

The ancient St. Simon Stylites dwelt thirty-seven years on the tops of pillars in the open air, exposed to all the rain and cold and heat, that he might crucify the body by this lingering martyrdom, and be perfectly joined to the Divine Being. He had his reward. He was called holy, saint, and many down to this day think he was a very good man, though in a great error. But his name is never mentioned in the habitations of sin and poverty as a benefactor, as a son of consolation, who clothed the naked, fed the hungry, visited the prisoner, and comforted the sick. However faithful his struggle and his self-sacrifice to be one with God, he lost the other blessedness of being one with mankind.

But it is not sufficient to have a filial piety; our Lord also teaches us a fraternal morality. When he said, "Love thy God," he did not forget to add, "Love thy neighbour." He showed what the world did not believe, and what his own followers to this day find it a great stretch of faith to

credit, that there is never any real opposition of men's interests one with another. That the good of one is the good of all, and the injury of one the injury of all. That no man liveth and no man dieth to himself. That so far as, by envy, anger, or pride, we cut ourselves off from the sympathies of the great whole of humanity, we lose a part of the substantial good of our being. We voluntarily withdraw ourselves, by so doing, from the ample range and spacious mansion assigned for our abode, and consent to take up our quarters in narrow and mean apartments. When we give to party, or sect, or clan what was meant for all mankind, we so far dwarf and dethrone our whole nature. We cannot afford to lose the good-will of a single member of the human family. We are bound to do all we can, without giving up our convictions of truth and duty, to preserve a kindly understanding with all men as men, as our brethren, as dear to the Heavenly Parent.

No theory of government, no plan of social organization, no mode of education, and no administration of religion, can hope to succeed in benefiting men, that is not based on the Christian view of their nature, and does not uphold the Christian morality. Too long has the state been esteemed as all in all, and the individual as little or nothing. Too long has the Church joined with the tyrant in pouring contempt on human nature. "Honor all men," stands against all these usurpations, as the bulwark of man's rights. The human soul is the greatest thing on earth. It transcends all cultures, or races, or colors. Mankind are one. They are of one origin, one nature, one interest, and one destiny. All slaveries, therefore, are cruelties in the family; all wars, murders under the same roof. And whatever harms one,

with the certainty of gravitation harms all. The life of humanity is one. And every drop of blood unjustly shed, every wrong, and oppression, and cruelty, is treason against the majesty of the race, against the life, and peace, and virtue of unnumbered and innumerable millions. And not one individual can live so remote or sequestered a life, as not to feel for better or for worse the influence of the mighty whole. No people, however lifted up to heaven in point of power or privilege, can long flourish in hostility to the liberties and peace of the rest of the world. Proud Babylon may exalt herself, but Babylon must one day lie as low as the humblest village she ever laid waste with fire and sword. Imperial Rome may flaunt her glories before high heaven; but against the queen of the earth, too, is written decline and downfall.

Through the medium of bread and tea and politics, we are interested in Ireland, and China, and Circassia; much more, through the all-diffusive sentiment of human brotherhood, we are concerned for every land, however remote, for every tribe, however barbarous. In this unity of the race and of man, in this fraternity of the nations alone, can any one people attain to its highest prosperity and happiness. One air enwraps the whole globe, and one sun shines every day upon all. Nature teaches us the identity of human interests; and the Gospel, with a sublime generalization, pronounces the multifarious races bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, and sinks in one impartial love the inequalities of Jew and Gentile, bond and free.

Peace would be but one of the fruits of the union of man with man. For peace, as generally understood and practised, has been but a species of armed neutrality. If men

have forborne to work one another ill, they have neglected, in this false doctrine of selfishness, this short-sighted and temporary policy and so-called expediency, to work one another good. Civilized and Christian society, too, has often been only a milder type of civil war; class against class, church against church, and town against town. The day when men shall be made perfect in their social union and coöperation has not yet arrived. But the commandments of Christ have not spent their vital force. They are the word of the day, and of all days. They contain the germs of a new civilization, as much superior to life in England or America, as that exceeds the brutality of New Zealand. The heavenly laws, "Love thy neighbour as thyself," and "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," embody the lofty ideal of a new morality; as the command, "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," inculcates a perfect piety.

The true disciple of Christ, therefore, or he who wishes for the true perfection and happiness of his being, will study to be *at one* with his Heavenly Father, and to be *at one* with his earthly brethren. This is the true *at-one-ment* and reconciliation, not in the dead letter of an antiquated theology, but in the living and life-giving spirit of divine truth. Jesus came to unite man with man, and man with God, and all real progress of his religion will exhibit this result. He lived and died for this cause. The song at his birth was peace; and his farewell blessing was peace.

And when we strive after the earnest communion of the finite with the Infinite in an humble and confiding piety, and after perfect love in every human relation, all other

difficulties are in the way of being quickly solved. When these two pillars stand, the whole social and spiritual fabric is safe. No lasting grief can root itself in a nature that is daily passing into the life of these magnanimous sentiments. The solid gloom of a skeptic misanthropy, a stoical contempt, or an atheistic indifference whether God rule above or man sin and suffer below, fly like the morning mist before the rising sun. This human and divine union is the solvent for all sins and all sorrows. It has the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come.

What a blessing would descend upon families, if this union were cherished! What a glory would invest the nations, if they would regard themselves but as greater families of God! What a sublime blessedness would rest on the whole moral earth, if, like the material, it were bound in everlasting gravitation to its great centre, and revolved in unconflicting harmony with its own system!

There has been a Greek church of Christ; but it has partaken largely of the old mysteries and mythologies that went before it on the same soil. There has been a Roman church of Christ, but it has had in it a great deal more of Cæsar than of God. There has been an English church of Christ; but its hierarchy of principalities and powers has savoured strongly of the dark and feudal ages. There have been Lutheran and Calvinistic churches of Christ; but they have embodied and preserved with fossil permanency the errors and whims of individual and erring men. Let there arise, then, a universal church of Christ; a new and holier fabric, partaking of the spirit of "Liberty, Holiness, Love"; the creation of a new world; large, and equal, and practical; adequate to the age in which we live, and all ages;

combining love to God and love to man, piety and morality, faith and works, religion and philanthropy, in bonds never to be broken. For such a church, to come out of the present dismembered and fragmentary condition of Protestant Christendom, let us pray with faith, and labor with zeal, and God may yet grant to our prayers and labors a glorious fulfilment.

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WHAT BECOMES ME?

OR THE

LIBERAL VIEW OF MAN'S NATURE,

CONSIDERED AS A MOTIVE

IN THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER.

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WHAT BECOMES ME?

Among man's many wants is the want of self-respect. He has been told so much of his weakness and depravity, that he has almost come to believe that there is little else than weakness and depravity in his nature. Would it not be well for him to be reminded more frequently of his higher endowments? At least, ought he not to be kept, if possible, from losing sight of the distinction which exists between what he is as he comes from the hand of his Creator, and what he so often makes himself by his vices? It seems to me a valuable characteristic of Liberal Christianity, that it ever recognizes this distinction, and finds in it a power to quicken and exalt men's conceptions of duty.

There are two ways of treating children at school; one is, to be always telling them that they are dunces, and cannot learn; the other is, to impress it on their minds, at proper seasons, that they have abilities for valuable acquisitions. The latter method, it appears to me, is the better one. So, as regards mankind at large, there are two modes of addressing them on moral and religious subjects; the one is, to talk to them perpetually of a supposed entire corruption of the human heart by nature, and thus to depress and

discourage them; the other is, to remind them often of the capabilities God has given them for high attainments in piety and virtue. Do I err in deeming the latter mode preferable to the former?

Men want, I have said, self-respect. Perhaps there is nothing, except reverence for God, that some persons more need than this. But no one can have it, who sees in his nature only weakness, impurity, and vice. And destitute of all self-respect, — having never learned to appreciate aright his natural capabilities, — a man lacks one of the most effective of moving forces. Inaction accompanies imagined impotency. Effort, if ever made, follows the belief that it will avail something. What can reasonably be expected of one who deems himself akin to the brute? or of him who supposes he was created with an irresistible proneness to sin, and with capacities and tastes for nothing else? If I wished to reduce a community to the lowest condition of vice, I should begin with trying to make its members think meanly of their nature, — with attempting to convince them that man is little more than a common animal, except that he has somewhat greater ingenuity and power for mischief. Among the steps of discipline by which an individual ascends in improvement towards perfection, one of the most important, in my opinion, is, that he learn, early in life, to respect himself, — to think worthily of what, as a human being, he was created to be and may become; and the teacher, I believe, can hardly do a better service, than to heighten in the community this sense of character, this feeling of a superior nature, this consciousness of moral capacity and power.

Nor let it be feared that hereby the grounds of Chrst-

tian humility will be removed. Respect for one's self, in the sense intended, is not the same as satisfaction with one's acquired character; it is simply the thinking justly, i. e. highly, of one's original nature. To form too lofty conceptions of what we have made ourselves is one thing, and certainly a bad thing; but it is quite another and a good thing, to respect, to deem sacred, to reverence profoundly, what God has made us. Christian humility grows out of the conviction, that divine gifts have been neglected or abused, not that they have never been received. It follows, that the true way to make a man feel humble is not to teach him that the nature he has in common with his race is a mean one; but it is to show him that, whatever be this nature, he has acted unworthily of it. Persuade a person, who is conscious of great moral deficiencies, that his original capabilities were of a high order, and you adopt the most effectual means of giving him the true feeling of humility; because you lead him to reflect on what he was created to be, and might have become, in contrast with what he knows that he is. Indeed, the more highly a man thinks of his nature, other things being alike, so much the more humbling must be his sense of personal failings and imperfections. Nor only this; the more highly one thinks of his nature, — provided he keeps within the bounds of truth, — so much the more probable is it, other things being equal, that he will improve; for such a man, as a matter of course, elevates the mark at which he aims from what has been done to what may be done by him; and if he do not reach perfection, he is sure to approach nearer to it for having it constantly in his view.

Provided he keeps within the bounds of truth, I said; for,

no doubt, the liberal view of the subject might be carried to an extreme that would prove harmful in the formation of character. But the qualifying words were not introduced to be dwelt upon, it being manifest enough that the prevailing tendency of thought is to estimate the natural capacities of man for good at too low, rather than too high, a rate. MAN! A little word this, composed of but three letters; and yet how much does it not imply? Who of us comprehends its entire meaning? Be it, as many love to suggest, that the creature designated by that brief syllable is often to be seen in conditions not very well suited to inspire the profoundest sentiment of respect, — in the cradle, in the forest, in the prison! What follows? That human nature is at fault? Why point me to the infant, the savage, the criminal? They afford no fair specimens of man's best capacities and powers. I see in them immaturity, or want of cultivation, or unfaithfulness; but no lack of natural ability for that which is good and great. What was man designed to be? what can he be? what is he, when, under appropriate circumstances, all his native powers are entirely and proportionably unfolded? Answer me these questions aright, and you give me correct views of human nature. In a word, the nature of man is to be learned, not from studying it in its uncultivated or abused state, but in its condition of full growth and perfection. Now take such an example, — take a man whose whole physical, intellectual, moral, and religious character is as it was intended to be, — full grown, completely developed, perfected, — and what, among the Creator's works, I ask, is so worthy of admiration? Reason, conscience, free-will, — how wonderful these in action! What power of thought! What

strength of affection! What noble deeds! He conceives of God! He feels himself immortal! He rises towards "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

And this, son of man, is the nature which it is thy charge not to despise, but to reverence; not to neglect, but to cultivate; not to degrade, but to exalt; not to stint and sully, but to enrich and adorn. Dost thou accept the charge? No other decision is worthy of thee. And wouldst thou be in a fit mood, always and everywhere, to obey it? Often, then, put, and as often answer, with deepest seriousness, to thyself, the stirring question, *What becomes me, gifted by God with such a nature?*

"What becomes me?" At once to rise above the sphere of the animal. It is beneath me to seek my chief good in sensual indulgence. Let my soul loathe the thought of being the slave of appetite and passion. The least that should be expected of me is, that I look beyond the body to the mind, and pass life, not in asking mainly, What shall I eat? What shall I drink? Wherewithal shall I be clothed? but in cultivating those portions of my nature which are distinctively human.

"What becomes me?" A strength of resolution for good, that no circumstances, no events, can break down. If any privilege or duty belongs to me, by God's appointment, it is that I have a will, subject to his, indeed, yet my own, and capable of exerting itself in matters of right and wrong, with a power against which all outward resistance must prove unavailing. Thus gifted, what self-reproach would be too great for me, should I let this noble faculty so lose its vigor that I could passively yield to every accidental impulse from abroad, — could allow the pressure of

surrounding things to mould and shape my character, — could submit to be floated hither and thither on the ever-changing current of affairs? God forbid that any such weaknesses should disgrace me! So far from it, if I would have my conduct worthy of my nature, let me act from a principle, a spring, an energy within, before which bad influences from without shall more than lose their harmfulness, unfavorable circumstances resolve themselves into means of wholesome discipline, and adverse events be made subservient in the end to virtue and happiness.

"What becomes me?" To see to it, that society do not absorb and dispose of me at will. Am I not a distinct, self-conscious, and accountable agent? — and did God intend, in creating me such, merely that I should make part of a whole, — should be merged in the mass of mankind, like a drop of rain falling into the sea? No, he created me for a separate existence, endued me with personal attributes, fitted my faculties for free exercise, constituted my own perfection my highest end, and ordained accordingly that I should have my appropriate space, stand upon my own feet, act a peculiar part, form a distinctive character, and appear at last to answer for myself alone at the judgment-seat. Shame on me, therefore, if I allow society to unman me, — if to sect or party, to church or state, I surrender my individuality, my independence, or my sense of personal obligation and responsibleness.

"What becomes me?" May I so much as dream of living for myself alone? Why is my nature so richly endowed with social affections? Why am I met on every side by fellow-creatures possessing hearts like my own, and yearning for the generous sympathies that I can yield

them? Why, in every walk of life, do I find opportunities and scope for the exercise of any charity which the warmest philanthropy can prompt, or the largest means sustain? Surely, if God made me for any thing, it is that I show myself benevolent. To be close-hearted when a kindred being craves that I would feel with him and for him, or close-handed when he needs the bounty it is in my power to bestow, would disgrace my nature indeed. Distant as possible from me, then, be every thing like this, — distant as possible the thought of shutting up and quenching, in a selfish soul, that divine principle of love within me, which, quickened and expanded as it was designed to be, knows no bounds to its benevolence; which recognizes in all human beings the image of God, and the rights of his children; which rejoices in virtue, wherever found, and sympathizes with suffering, wherever seen; which vanquishes pride, and selfishness, and indolence, and offers itself up, if need be, a willing sacrifice on the broad altar of society.

"What becomes me?" No timidity, no fear, except that of doing wrong. How should I not despise myself, as well as provoke the Divine displeasure, were I, from tameness of spirit or dread of reproach, to blink points of error because they chance to be popular, or connive at evil practices because they are fashionable, or affect to countenance bad men and measures because a strong public sentiment sustains them? Infinitely far from me be all such meannesses, born of cowardice. Little better to a noble mind can they seem, than the vices which spring from corruption of heart. Mine should be the courage that can stand manfully up for the true, and the just, and the useful, whatever

be the opposing influence of prevailing creeds, inveterate customs, elevated stations, or vast majorities. Yes, and, God helping me, mine it shall be; — mine the spirit, that nothing in this world's artificial glare and glory awes or abashes, that is frightened from the narrow way of right by no difficulty, threat, or peril, but which clings to duty, bold in the presence of danger, calm in the midst of tumult, self-possessed and determined, though all be adverse, save conscience and God.

"What becomes me?" To submit to be enslaved by gold? to be intoxicated by fame? to be stupefied by sloth? Even the thought of it seems a degradation. Absent from my soul, let me at once say, be every worldly desire which, in gratifying itself, will weaken my strength, disturb the balance of my powers, interfere with my freedom of action, hinder my moral advancement, or diminish my usefulness. What to me, for instance, should be wealth, if, in the getting of it, I must lose my integrity and peace of mind, or in the spending of it, must become a sot or a glutton? What to me should be office, if the way to it lead me through corruption, and the station itself is surrounded with all that perplexes and debases? What to me should be leisure, — that boon so much coveted, — if, in the enjoyment of it, I must think of no concern on earth but to live and act what is called the fine gentleman, — that is, eat, and drink, and dress, and lounge when and where fashion bids, having nothing to do but pamper the body, chase frivolous pleasures, and flutter prettily about society, the most insignificant and worthless thing in God's creation? And so of the rest; — as I am a man, away with them all, so far, I mean, as they hurt what in me is manly. For

why should I let any low passion despoil my higher nature of its Creator's image while living, and in dying leave behind me no memorial of my privileged existence, except, perhaps, a stone or two over my grave, and some few words of an epitaph, which, if true, can only serve to remind passers-by that I was rich, and held an office, and was a gentleman of leisure, and did nobody any good, but much harm to many, at least by my example, — when I might cherish principles, might perform deeds, might build up a character, which would render my life on earth a blessing to myself and to society, cause me, when dead, to be remembered with respect and affection by my survivors, and entitle me to inherit in heaven the promises made to the faithful?

"What becomes me?" Any thing less than seeking and striving for the best culture of every part of my nature? Suppose a single faculty stinted, or deformed, or misapplied, through my own fault, could I think of it without mortification? God's will it clearly is, that all the capacities and powers he gave me shall be quickened and developed proportionably, in harmony with each other, and fully. Can I meet him in peace, if any of them, by neglect or abuse on my part, are dormant, or distorted, or at war with the rest? O, then, let no easy contentedness with being and doing what becomes me in a few particulars prevent my aiming at that completeness of character, which alone can satisfy either the divine law or my own conscience! Whatever else I may lose sight of, never let me forget that my chief glory, for time and for eternity, consists in this, — that I think, and feel, and act worthily of my whole nature, worthily of an intelligent, moral, pro-

gressive, religious, and immortal being. How many, how great, how valuable, the powers and privileges indicated by these five words! Not less various and weighty and sacred are the obligations under which God has placed me. — Am I endued with intellect, for the use of which it is mine alone to answer? In cultivating it, I must carefully guard its rights and powers, — must allow it to be ruled only by the Father of all, or his Son and Spirit, — must call no man master, — must subscribe slave to no human creed, — must not hastily or blindly assent to questionable opinions, be they old or be they new, — must passively yield to no usurpations of authority in matters either of faith or of practice; but must assert and maintain the prerogatives of a freeman in Christ Jesus, — must think and judge, deliberate and choose, for myself, restrained by no fear but that of myself and of my God. — Am I gifted with a moral nature, fitted for progress? Virtue, then, ought to be my chosen, as it is my appointed vocation, and in it I should not fail to strive more and more. Mine must be a growing character of true holiness. For this end, away with the swaddling bands of infancy, with the cramping fetters of all unworthy habits. Every day I should advance as far as possible in excellence; let me, therefore, lay aside every thing which encumbers me, that I may run freely. It cannot be well for me to stick for ever at the letter of the law; so, then, I will strive to act more and more from its spirit. Nor must I rest contented with doing over and over again what I have done, — with trying to live on my old acquisitions, however great they may be; but, forgetting what is behind, I must reach forward to that which is before, form loftier conceptions of duty, gather strength for larger efforts, listen for more stirring monitions

of conscience, supplicate Providence with renewed fervency for wider spheres of usefulness, and rejoice to pour myself forth in fresh and higher exertions. — Am I a religious and immortal being? Then, conscious of my relationship to God, hallowing his name, reverencing his laws, and relying, with childlike trust, on his power to sustain, and his goodness to bless, my soul, hereafter, as well as now, let me make diligent and faithful use of whatever means of grace Divine Providence and the holy Gospel afford, for perfecting within me the religious sentiment, — that noblest characteristic of my nature, — passing often, in thought and feeling, the bounds of time and death, and finding inexhaustible sources of spiritual energy, both for action and suffering, in the prospect of everlasting life and happiness beyond the grave.

Yes, "the religious sentiment"; this, by all means, let me cultivate, whatever else I fail to do. It is that which, more than any thing beside, distinguishes my nature from that of the brute creation. Suppose it in me but a lifeless, inoperative principle, — a capacity undeveloped, — a great power in itself, bestowed by God, but never recognized, never excited, never employed by myself, — how poor, defective, unworthy a specimen of humanity must I not seem, — in constitution and form a man, but in growth, religiously and spiritually, a dwarf! What a thought! How can I entertain it without burning shame? How can I bear to glance in upon my soul in solitude, or dare look my fellow-beings in the face, as they greet me in society, when I know that the highest, most precious portion of my nature has been neglected? God put that in me which I have not sought for and cultivated. I have, as it were, buried my choicest

talent in the earth. What a thought! How can I endure it, if there be yet in me one ingenuous feeling, or a single spark of ambition to fulfil the chief end of my being? How can I bear to think that there is in my soul a treasure of which I have never learned the value, — the germ of a glorious character, which I have been at no pains to nourish and mature? Awake, O my soul! if thou still sleepest; rouse thyself to the sense of religion, as that which, more than all things else, becomes thee. Know and feel the great truth, that the spiritually cultivated alone are aware of man's real dignity; that they only are perfect examples of what human beings were created to be, and, under Christian culture, may become; that none but they can enjoy, either in this life or the next, the full satisfaction of which our nature is capable, and which God, through his blessed Son, promises to the faithful.

Let the Tract end in the manner it began. The low conceptions of human nature that have prevailed are as injurious as they are false, their direct tendency being to destroy self-respect, and, along with this, whatever is worthy in thought, feeling, and conduct. Scarcely any thing do men in general more need, in the formation of character, than the motive furnished by elevated views of the capacities, powers, and qualities, which, through God's grace, belong to the nature whereof they are partakers. From the liberal doctrine on this subject, vast multitudes, it is known, dissent, and some believers in it seem to doubt the expediency of making it a frequent topic of instruction. But, for myself, I as decidedly differ from the latter class as from the former. The doctrine seems to me not only true, but of great practical importance; and the prevalent modes

of thought and action show that there is much need of its being often inculcated and earnestly enforced. Who can suppose that mankind would conduct themselves so unworthily as they do, but for the degrading notions they have been taught to entertain of their nature? How can they be elevated in morals and religion, unless it be impressed upon their minds that they are capable of high attainments, — that *it is really in them*, as a law and force of their natural constitution, aided by the Gospel, to rise to eminence in virtue and piety? As for thee, my brother, my sister, — whoever thou mayst be that readest these pages, — if thou feelest within thy soul any desire to be and do all that, and only that, which becomes thee, then, first and at once, know and understand what God hath created thee, what he hath taught thee to aspire after, and what thou canst, under him, make thyself. Such knowledge, gained betimes, will be to thee one of the best safeguards against vice, and one of the most efficient quickeners of virtue. Till thou learnest something of thy higher nature, of thy chief end, and of the greatness of thy moral powers, there can be little hope that thou wilt act worthily. True, indeed, it is to be borne in mind by thee, that thou hast thy weak points, that thou art liable to disobey God's holy law, and that actually thou art a transgressor of it in thought, feeling, and conduct. Yes, and more than this; abhor thy sins, cast them far from thee, lament in dust and ashes thy short-comings, and bow in all contrition and humility before the throne of divine grace. But whatever be the defects of thine own character, however undeserving thou mayst at times deem thyself, never cast reproach on human nature. Think of Him who made it what it is, and honor the Creator by

respecting his work. Next to God and his Son Jesus Christ, reverence thy nature; stand in awe of it; guard it from error and pollution more carefully than thou protectest the safety of thy life. Turn away from those who would rob thee of the conviction that thou hast within thee, as the gift of an all-wise and benevolent God, capacities and principles which ally thee to the spirits on high. Crave association with those who recognize and delight to speak of the native greatness, the immortal growth, of the human soul. At all times and in all places, remember, — or, if thou chance to forget it, seek to be reminded as soon as possible, — that a mere animal thou art not, but a being of a higher order, made "a little lower than the angels," created "in the image of God," and of "his own eternity"; and with full comprehension of what this language of Holy Writ means, see to it that thou art up to all which it implies.

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THE

NATURAL MAN

AND

THE SPIRITUAL MAN.

BY LEVI W. LEONARD.

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THE

NATURAL MAN

AND

THE SPIRITUAL MAN.

THERE are few passages of Scripture which have given rise to more important discussions, or which it is more desirable to understand correctly, than those in which the Apostle Paul describes man's state by nature and his state after the character is brought into full subjection to the spirit and law of Christ. "The natural man," he says, "receiveth not the things of the spirit of God." What is the *natural man?* In what respects does he differ from the *spiritual man?*

The word translated *natural* means *animal*, or *sensual*. It signifies a man who is under the influence of his animal or sensual propensities, — a man uncontrolled by moral and religious principles. His animal or fleshly impulses are stronger than any other. He has been born only of the flesh; the flesh predominates, and he does only the works of the flesh. He perceiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for while he is serving his animal lusts, the things of the spirit — the truths revealed and the duties enjoined by God — are foreign from his desires and tastes. He has no relish for them, — he does not value them nor cherish them. His higher and nobler faculties lie dormant, or they

are crushed beneath the burden of sensuality. He reflects not on his own nature and destination, as revealed in the Gospel. Being engrossed by the things of time and sense, he has no spiritual discernment. He has never cultivated his spiritual nature, and the things which God has revealed by his spirit are not received, because the eyes of his mind are shut against their light. He regards them as foolishness. He knows not their worth, for they are spiritually discerned. They are not seen by the outward eye, by the animal man; neither can he know them till he consecrates his spirit to the work of understanding them, and practically obeys a religion which commands him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.

Such is the natural — the animal or the sensual — man.

The *spiritual* man, on the other hand, is under the influence of his higher faculties and affections, and of the truths revealed by the spirit of God. These spiritual things are not discerned by his animal nature, but by his spirit. They are not born of his flesh; they are born of his spirit. They are not seen by the outward eye. They are the result of self-reflection, of reflection on divine truth, and of the application of truth to the heart and life. They are called things of the spirit, because they are the object, not of the external senses, but of the inward spirit, and because they are what God by his spirit has made known.

Such is the spiritual man, — the man who is under the influence of his higher faculties, and of the truths revealed by the Divine spirit.

But the subject deserves illustration, and we may make it more plain by referring to things known and understood. We will suppose two men, one ignorant of the principles

and facts of some particular science, — geology, for instance, — and the other thoroughly instructed in them ; one indifferent to the whole subject, caring nothing about it, and the other deeply interested and actively engaged in its pursuit. Now the man who knows nothing or cares nothing about the principles and facts of geology may be said, in respect to that science, to be a natural man. All men are so before they pay attention to it, and become engaged in it. They receive not the things pertaining to that science, for they are only to be geologically discerned. They are discerned by the application, cultivation, and exercise of certain powers of the mind. This geological discernment is not born of the flesh ; it does not belong to the natural man, or man is not capable of it as a sensual, animal being. To such a man the principles and facts of geology are foolishness, — things of no value ; neither can he know them or appreciate them till he opens the eyes of his mind, and devotes himself to their study and pursuit. Such is the natural man in reference to the science of geology. He might pass over those parts of a country which are the richest in mineral wealth, and abounding in materials interesting and instructive to the skilful and practised geologist, and yet by *him* all would be unobserved. He would receive nothing to awaken interest and lead to action from all the objects of this kind which lay beneath his feet, or met the gaze of his eye. Like the uncultivated Indian of the forest, he would pass over the richest mines of wealth, and perceive no indications of their presence. All would seem to him as dust and dross, as foolish things, deserving no special regard, and possessing no intrinsic worth.

But let another man, a man who is well versed in the

science, and has his heart engaged in it, pass over the same tract of country, and how different will be his perceptions, emotions, and conduct! In consequence of his geological discernment, he will discover objects of interest at almost every step. He is not a natural, or merely animal man, in regard to this subject. He receiveth readily the things of geology. They are not foolishness unto him. From his past observation and experience, he is able to discern treasures where the other saw nothing but sand and rocks. He takes high pleasure in observing what seemed to the other all dulness and insipidity. His interest in the subject leads to action and to profitable results. And all is the fruit of having cultivated those faculties which are above the animal or sensual part of his nature, — those faculties which enable him to comprehend the principles and facts of geology, and induce him to pursue the science with zeal and perseverance.

The subject might be further illustrated by referring to other sciences or branches of knowledge, — astronomy, for instance. The man ignorant of astronomy, or caring nothing about it, may, with respect to that science, be properly termed a natural man. He looks at sun, moon, and stars, and regards them only as bright spots in the wide expanse of heaven. No thought that they are worlds, and that their distances, motions, and revolutions can be calculated, enters his mind. He sees them with his animal eye, but his higher faculties are not awakened. He receiveth not the things which astronomy teaches, for they are discerned through a knowledge of facts and principles of which he is ignorant; neither can he know them, for they are astronomically discerned, discerned by mental powers which in him have

never been exercised in that direction. But let an astronomer like Newton, Laplace, or Bowditch look at the heavens, glowing with stars and constellations, what a totally different train of thoughts and reflections will be set in motion! The spiritual eye will see worlds and combinations of worlds, glory and harmony, wisdom and power, which to the natural or animal man are wholly unknown, and which, when even named to him, while in his natural state, as born of the flesh, would seem foolishness, — vain dreams and idle tales.

But enough has been said to illustrate, in this way, the meaning of the phrase *natural man*. We speak of some whole tribes of men as being in a state of nature. They are almost entirely under the influence of their animal or sensual propensities. Their spiritual nature has never been cultivated or developed. They have been born only of the flesh.

On this subject it may be remarked, that the animal or sensual propensities of man are not useless, but necessary parts of his constitution. They are necessary to his very existence as a man. Without them he could not be a man and live in this world. But these wants of the flesh, these animal propensities, require no outward stimulants to excite their proper action. Their action is spontaneous. It does not proceed from any effort of man's will. The sensations of hunger and thirst are natural, necessary, unavoidable, if food and drink are not duly supplied. The desire to gratify those feelings is not wrong. But since they are self-prompted, it is necessary to restrain them within proper limits, and prevent their being gratified with what is hurtful. Of themselves they cannot discriminate,

or discern what is salutary or noxious. Poison is often as sweet to the taste as the most nourishing food. Man has not the instinctive discernment of the beasts of the field to enable him to distinguish one from the other. But man has higher faculties, — reason, understanding, moral judgment, or conscience. These endowments of the spirit are to be brought into action, and to restrain and control the propensities of the flesh. In the state of infancy, or before the higher faculties are sufficiently matured, parents or friends restrain or prevent the improper indulgence of the animal propensities. They do so, or they should do so, till reason, judgment, and conscience are so cultivated and matured as to enable the young to regulate and direct their own animal desires, and properly to supply their own animal wants.

The cravings of the flesh, if unrestrained, are prolific sources of evil and of crime. There is nothing criminal in their lawful indulgence. Crime, or sin, consists in indulging them beyond due bounds, or supplying them with that which is known to be injurious. What is salutary may be useful, but from what is hurtful there must be abstinence.

Such is the nature or constitution of man, as created by God and placed in this world.

But, surrounded by the objects of sense, continually inviting indulgence, the natural power of reason and conscience has not effectually restrained man from forbidden and hurtful gratifications. Adam and Eve yielded to temptation in the garden of Eden, and their posterity in all ages have done the same, in whatever situations they have been placed. They have thus brought on themselves the misery of guilt, and exposed themselves to its painful con-

sequences. But God, the merciful Father of his dependent creatures, has had compassion upon them. In addition to the light of nature, besides revealing himself in his works, he has in other ways graciously interposed to save man from his sins. "God did, at sundry times and in divers manners, speak in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, and hath, in these last days, spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." The facts and principles revealed by the prophets, by Jesus Christ and his Apostles, which the natural, the sensual, or the animal man receiveth not, are the things of the spirit of God. The animal man receiveth them not, because he judges of things by his senses and passions. He makes these the measure of truth and the rule of conduct, paying no regard to the discoveries of revelation. Of this character were the heathen philosophers, to whom the doctrines of the Gospel were foolishness. Of this character were the Jewish scribes, and those false teachers whom Jude in his Epistle calls "sensual, having not the spirit." The spiritual man is not an *inspired* person, but a person whose spiritual faculties, his reason and conscience, are not controlled by his animal nature, but have their due ascendency, — a person who entertains a just sense of the authority of revelation, and, being desirous of knowing the truth, is assisted in his inquiries by the spirit of God.

Taking what has been said into consideration, it will be readily perceived that the language of the Apostle cannot properly be quoted to prove that the natural or animal man is, in any way, implicated in the transgression and consequent guilt of our first parents. Adam had the same animal nature, or sensual propensities, with which all his posterity

have been created. He yielded to temptation, obeying his animal appetite. His descendants have done the same, in all generations. Sin lies at our door, not because our progenitor sinned, but because we ourselves sin, — because, notwithstanding all the light, the instruction, which God hath imparted by his spirit, we yield to animal impulses, live after the flesh, in which we were born, and do not discern, examine, or mind the things of the spirit.

The words of Paul are sometimes quoted for another purpose. For instance, in a disagreement between two persons about some alleged truth of Christianity, one says to the other, — "You are a natural man, and discern not the things of the spirit. If you were spiritually enlightened, as I have been, you would admit the truth as I do." Now, in such a case, the person intends to say that he has received a special illumination from the spirit of God, by reason of which he is enabled to discern what the other cannot. But, to say nothing of the spiritual pride thus indicated, the Apostle does not give his sanction to any such notion. It is an assumption. The Apostle does not intimate that a man cannot understand the truths of revelation, or discern the things of the spirit, by the use of those faculties which God has given to all men. If any man was really unable to understand the saving truths of revelation without a special Divine illumination, for that purpose, he would be excusable for not receiving them till his mind was thus illuminated. But it is not so; for though some things are hard to be understood, yet all that is essential to salvation is represented as being so intelligible that even the most unlearned may understand. We say again, therefore, that it is an assumption, a gratuitous assumption, for

one to say to another, that the reason of his not receiving certain doctrines is that he has not been specially illuminated by the Divine spirit. If one sect of Christians might thus assume, so with equal propriety might another. The Roman Catholic might say to the Protestant, — "You do not receive the doctrine of transubstantiation because your mind has not been specially enlightened on the subject, as mine has been." And so of all sects; each might as consistently say the same to another; and the assertion of one would be of as much validity as the assertion of another.

The truth is, God has made a revelation to man, and there is no invincible impediment to his understanding it. He can, if he will apply his mind to it, understand all that is necessary to his personal salvation. If he could not, it would not be a revelation; for to call that a revelation which requires another revelation to make it intelligible must be a misapplication of terms. Man, then, is able with his natural faculties to understand the things of the spirit, and God will not work a miracle to do for him what he has enabled him to do for himself. This is by no means inconsistent with the doctrine of Divine influence, as taught in the Scriptures. We are dependent upon God, and without him we can do nothing; but we are not to expect miraculous interference, as many evidently do. As we seek, we shall find; as we strive, we shall win. It will not do to plead that we cannot know the truth and obey it. Were the husbandman to sit still and refuse to plant, because he could not of himself make the corn grow, where would be his harvest? We are all too apt to seek excuses for inaction in the plea of inability. Like the unwilling school-boy in commencing a new study, we say, "We can't learn it, we can't under-

stand it," before we have made the attempt in earnest. Whereas, if we only begin, and do, as far as we can, the will of God, we shall then know of the doctrine that it is divine and efficacious.

Here the question may properly be answered, How does a natural or animal man become a spiritual man, and discern the things of the spirit? Much of what has already been said must have led the reader to anticipate the answer. The animal man becomes a spiritual man by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, receiving the truths which he hath revealed, and doing the things he hath commanded. He must use the means which God hath appointed for enlightening his mind, sanctifying his heart, and regulating his conduct. Those who seek light will find it; and if they faithfully follow it, God will bless them, and advance them in the way of purity and peace. If they continue to be honest and faithful, their experience will soon teach them that the things of the spirit of God, or the facts and principles of the Gospel, are not foolishness. Their spiritual discernment will be quickened. They will have, as they advance, a deeper and deeper conviction that the Gospel is indeed "the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." They will love, fear, and serve God, not as a task; it will be their delight. Their animal impulses will be brought under subjection to the law of God.

But how shall men know when they have passed from the animal to the spiritual state? "By their fruits," said our Saviour, "ye shall know them," and it is by the fruits produced that men may know themselves. The animal man "minds the things of the flesh"; and the works of the

flesh, says the Apostle, are "idolatry, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; concerning which I foretell you now, as I have foretold you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God; but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law; and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts"; that is, they have subjected the appetites and lusts of the flesh to the law of Christ and of the spirit.

Here are characteristics sufficiently definite. No one who makes a faithful application of them, and determines to eschew the works of the flesh, and to mind the things of the spirit, will be at a loss in forming a judgment of his own state.

Let us, then, examine ourselves, and inquire how far our animal propensities are in subjection to the laws of God, — whether we discern the things of the spirit and take pleasure therein, — whether our hearts are yet wrapped up in sense and sensuality, or by the grace of God have burst the bonds of sin, and yielded to the expanding influence of love to God and man. Are we thinking more of the animal man, the body, that perishes, than of the spiritual man, the soul, that dies not for ever? "There is," says St. Paul, "a natural [that is, an animal] body, and there is a spiritual body." Which do we most value, cherish, and provide for?

It is the case with too many in the world, that they reflect not with prayerful seriousness upon their powers, capacities, responsibilities, duties, and destination. They are borne

along with the tide of folly and levity, and grasp only at shadows. The promises and threatenings of religion fall upon their ears, but make no abiding impression. There is no chord in their hearts which vibrates to the touch of Divine truth. The best powers of their souls are in a torpid state, not absolutely dead, yet not alive to any effectual purpose of improvement in virtue and holiness. They are natural or animal men.

The animal man discerneth not the things of the spirit, the pleasures and joys of the spiritual man. He has never entertained and cultivated them in his heart. To feel their full value and import, to feel that they are indeed spirit and life, he must make them something more than objects of mere intellectual contemplation. He must not only know, or mentally discern, the things of the spirit of God, but he must love and obey, be faithful and persevere in well-doing. Until he does this, he cannot reasonably expect to gather a harvest of spiritual fruits. "If ye know these things," said the Saviour, "happy are ye if ye do them." Let us never rest, then, on mere knowledge, nor on frames of mind which come and go as times and seasons change. Let us not mistake the impulse of passion or of strong feeling for the holy flame of God's spirit; but let us judge the tree by its fruits, by the fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ Jesus unto eternal life. "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

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JESUS

THE

MANIFESTATION OF THE FATHER.

BY JAMES I. T. COOLIDGE.

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JESUS THE MANIFESTATION OF THE FATHER.

I PROPOSE to occupy the following pages in an attempt to penetrate and unfold the doctrine involved in the words, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." We shall find in them, I think, the life and essence of the Gospel.

The question often arises, What are the distinctive features of Christianity? Wherein does it differ from, and how far does it go beyond, all other systems of religion? It is said that all its essential truths, its great and cardinal doctrines, had been, or might have been, discovered by the unassisted researches of the human mind. Great labor and learning have been expended in disproving the originality of many or all of the teachings of Jesus, in exploring the various systems of the philosophers before the Christian period, and gathering from them the proofs of the assertion, that all which he proclaimed had been said, and well said, in the ancient schools, and therefore required no special enlightenment and no extraordinary inspiration. But all this appears to me, if not a profitless expenditure of time and learning, yet a dispute at least upon unessential matters. Granted that his bare statements of truth and duty may have been here and there anticipated by some distinguished teachers in the Jewish or heathen schools, — that you may cull out here and

there noble passages from the writings of the sages who preceded the introduction of Christianity, which eloquently declare the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the immortality of the soul. But what then? Does this exhaust the whole matter? Is there nothing more in the Gospel than these and kindred doctrines? Are there not peculiarities remaining still for explanation? It is not Christianity as a system, it is not Christ's religion collected into sayings, or forms, or teachings, or dogmas, that I chiefly value. It is not Jesus simply as Teacher and Example who wins my deepest reverence and quickens my strongest affection. These are not the offices which draw me, draw all men, unto him. There is a truth in him, as a *person*, deeper than any of his spoken words. There is a light in him, in *himself*, brighter than any of his sayings, wonderful as those sayings may be and are. There is a glory in him, in *himself*, greater than belongs to the wisest teacher, or the richest in God's inspiration. The peculiarity, the life, the essence, of the Gospel is to be found in the sentiment embodied in the words, "Whosoever hath seen *me* hath seen the Father." The grand, central, all-comprehending idea of his mission is found in this great truth; all other truths are secondary, and circle round this one centre as the planets round the sun.

Let us, then, endeavour to arrive at this truth. I need not pause to declare, that I cannot discover in this language any hint of the mystical doctrine of the Trinity. I do not understand Jesus as replying to the demand of Philip, that he and the Father are one and the same being, — that he, there, sitting in that upper chamber, at that lowly table, is the same Being who sitteth upon the throne of the universe,

adored by the hosts of heaven, and filling immensity with his presence. Had the disciples so understood him, what an awe would have fallen upon them, prostrating them to the earth! What a sudden exclamation would have burst from the quivering lips, Depart from us, for we are sinful men, O God! The head of the loving John would no longer have rested on that tender bosom. Their calmness and composure forbid the thought that they so understood their Master. And Jesus himself guards against the possibility of such an interpretation. He always declares, and is careful to declare, that his likeness to God is derived from the inspiration of God, proceeds not from his own nature, is a gift, and not a right. His words are the illumination of the Divine wisdom dwelling in him; his works are the exhibition of a delegated power; his spirit is the breathing of the Infinite Spirit moving over his ever-open soul. Nothing is more prominent in the Master than his constant reference of all things to God, his consciousness of entire dependence upon his Father, his repeated declaration that he could do nothing, except the Father were with him. He could not, therefore, have here intended to assert his inherent and underived Godhead.

And yet certainly Jesus meant more by this form of speech, than that whosoever received his teaching and followed his example should know of the Father. Such an interpretation takes all the force out of the passage. It deprives it at once of all its peculiarity, and reduces it very much to the level of a commonplace. And it is quite time to protest against those interpretations of all the remarkable utterances of Jesus, which deprive them of power and almost of meaning, by the substitution of Chris-

tianity for *Christ*, his religion for his *person*. There is a peculiar — yes, a mysterious — relation between God and Christ, which is above, and was meant to be above, our comprehension, but not beyond faith, — a relation, also, which renders him in very truth the Saviour of man. And that relation makes up the significance of that saying of his which is now before us, — "Whosoever hath seen me hath seen the Father." Let us now endeavour to penetrate it. And I begin by saying, that the great want of the soul is to know the Father. Philip gave expression only to the universal voice of humanity, when he exclaimed, — "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us." Man needs to know the Father so deeply, so clearly, so heartily, that he shall trust in him with the whole confidence of his soul, — shall feel that God cares for him, is tenderly interested in him, watches over him with affectionate solicitude. He needs, for his peace and steadfast repose, to know and feel that he may lean upon God with implicit reliance; that God is very near to him, surrounding him with his love and compassion, and ready to pour into his weak and struggling soul the might and omnipotence of his inspiration; that he is not alone at any time, for the Father is with him for ever. Man needs more than a faith in an Infinite Spirit, a presiding Mind, a Ruler and Governor of the universe. This faith alone is a blessed faith, and worthy of our deep gratitude and earnest culture. But it is not sufficient for all the heart's necessities. The heart needs to repose in this great Being, to trust, to confide in him, to feel that it may love and that it is beloved by him. It yearns, amid all its trying experiences, and stern discipline, and conflicts pressing it hard, — too hard it seems at times, — it yearns to look up and feel a Fa-

ther's eye resting benignantly upon it; that it is watched by an infinite interest and affection, by a tender pity, which comes near to it, ministers to it, shelters it. It asks that it may feel it is an object of value in the sight of the Almighty, that it is not lost in the vast immensity which surrounds it, that it is upheld, guided, blessed, by an unceasing vigilance of mercy. It asks that it may bow its head and say, "*Our Father* who art in heaven."

And now the grand question is, How shall a man attain to this faith? How shall he reach to that knowledge of God which shall make this confidence, hope, repose, in God possible? How shall he gain a knowledge of the parental relation which the Infinite Mind has established between himself and man? The direct contemplation of God fills us with a deep awe and unspeakable wonder. The glory of his majesty, the unapproachable light in which he dwelleth, the dread mysteries which surround his throne, the awfulness of his purity and holiness, his eternity, omnipotence, and infinitude, overwhelm the soul that would gaze where angels veil their faces; and from the summit to which it raises itself the better to contemplate his attributes, it falls back to the lowest valley, crushed beneath the weight of the Divine majesty. The infinite glories of God no soul can look upon. They are dark, through excess of light. There must be some medium through which his glories shall shine in milder lustre, before the soul can find in their contemplation rest, peace, and strength.

Shall we better discern *the Father* amid the works of his creation? Is creation that medium? How much do we gain from a study of the outward world? I find myself surrounded there by the mightiest powers and agencies; but

they inspire me with no trust, awaken no confidence, afford no repose to the weary heart. They thrill me with an infinite dread. They oppress me with the thought of their fearful and irresistible power. They stand round me, tremendous agents, able at any moment to cast systems and worlds into sudden destruction. When I consider how terrible a power they sometimes put forth, making the solid earth quiver and reel, rending its surface and ploughing deep furrows on its broad bosom, — when I observe how suddenly and awfully men's possessions and lives are swept away by the angry elements, by the winds and waves and flames, — when, too, I examine the surface and depths of the earth, and see the mighty wrecks of former worlds, — when I see written beneath the face of Nature, which now looks up so calmly and peacefully, the terrible memorial of fire and deluge, — I feel, that, if I were left to Nature alone, I might fear the Ruler of these mighty powers, but I could never learn to repose my whole heart upon his mercy and love. And when we look up at the deep vault, arched at an awful distance above our heads, and behold there the planets revolving in silence through their vast circuits, never varying a hair's breadth from their appointed courses; when we reflect upon the inconceivable distance through the fields of infinitude each ray of light from that host has travelled to fall upon our weak sight; when, too, we consider that the vision of man has gone penetrating onwards, to an extent never conceived, through this multitude of systems, and that, while new centres start up at every advance, he has received as yet no hint of having reached the outermost boundary of creation; we may be overcome with wonder, — deep, even painful wonder; we may be over-

whelmed, lost, confounded, by the magnitude of the glorious spectacle; but we have found no ground as yet for implicit trust. We have learned, in truth, nothing to teach us that we here, covering with our presence but a mere hand's breadth of the earth, are objects of tender interest and parental solicitude in the eyes of Him who sitteth on the throne of the universe; nay, the distance between ourselves and the Creator seems to be immeasurably increased. It appears as if we, each one of us, could have no chance and no claim for the regard of the Ruler of the whole. And this very order that reigns is unspeakably oppressive at times. It has the calmness and coldness of mechanism; it is never broken. And yet we are weak, struggling with difficulties, worn with anxieties, laboring with the weight of sin, burdened with grief. Still, the heavens are calm above our heads, the earth moves steadily beneath our feet, as if Nature did not heed us, as if its Author were unmindful of the sad and fearful conflicts that are going on within us. The heart cries out for a Providence; and Nature shows it only an Omnipotence ruling the awful energies which encompass it, energies and forces which nevertheless work on man's happiness or misery, and man himself alike unheeded. I wonder not that so many have seen only indifference or hate in the movements of the natural world. I cannot see in them omnipotent love. I see much that is lovely; but not love only, or love mainly. I cannot see *the Father* clearly, undoubtingly, in the work of his creation. I cannot learn to repose in the Great Creator. As I stand amid the immensity and sublimity of the universe, as I stand alone beneath the mighty dome of the starry night, I can only exclaim, as another has written, —

"O that the Great Being who made the universe would for once touch as no hand but his can touch the *springs* of this all-encompassing, mysterious order, and say to me in the sublime pause, I love thee, I will care for thee, I will save thee, I will bear thee on my affection, I will shelter thee beneath my providence!"

If Nature does not teach us concerning *the Father*, so neither can the mind arrive at the certainty of its filial relation towards the Infinite God by its own meditation and study. It is sometimes said that the mind needs no revelation for its aid. In the witness that is within it, in the image of God in which it is made, in the lofty purposes it can cherish, in the immortal faculties and affections with which it is endowed, in the sublime aspirations which overleap all bounds and rise to God, the human mind finds enough to teach it to lean trustingly and confidingly on the arm of the Almighty, to look up, as a child, to the Infinite and Holy One, to pray, and to feel the presence of the Great Father close upon the soul. Let him who asserts this hold by it, if he will. It is not so written in the experience of most. It is indeed true we find in ourselves aspirations which pass the bounds of this world, — thoughts, affections, powers, which lift us up towards the Infinite Spirit. In our highest moods, we may feel those cravings of the soul which all but claim alliance with the Infinite Mind; feel that we live, not by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth from the mouth of God; feel that he must supply our deepest needs, feed our holiest aspiration, warm and kindle it renewedly with his spirit when it wearies and faints in its course; that he upholds, fills, governs, our whole being; that his hand is over us in benediction for ever.

But there are other moods, not the highest, but the most common to erring, suffering man, when we are depressed, saddened, wearied, by the hard conflicts of life, when passion has ruled, and temptation has triumphed, and sin has laid its infecting and withering touch upon us, and the affections droop as in a frost, and the spirit faints, cannot rise, cannot look up and spring confidingly to God. There are such moods. Do we *then*, I ask, need no help to make trust in God possible, — no help, no encouragement, no invitation, to make access to the All-Holy easy and natural and filial, — to make confession, the unburdening of the weight which oppresses us, as simple and open as a penitent child towards a parent of whose compassion and tenderness there can be no doubt?

And there are still other states of mind. We are grieved, disappointed, cast down; our prospects in life are dark; gloom is upon our path; our elasticity of spirit is gone; the spring of our mind is wellnigh broken; perplexities chafe, defeats wound, anxieties lacerate us. Where now shall we find the *infinite pity* that we so much need? Friends desert and leave us to bear our burden as we can; abroad are cold words and still colder looks; at home are silent distress and hard wrestling with narrowed circumstances and threatening poverty. Where now shall we find the *infinite pity*? How know and feel that even then the Great God is watchful of us as a father of his child? This would be a balm indeed to take the soreness out of our bruised heart, and send us back with a strong will to meet and baffle all our trouble. Where shall we find this saving truth? Our mind, bowed, oppressed, almost broken with despondency, gives us no hint of it.

And there is another state of mind yet. I am sad because the loved have given me the last pressure of the hand and fallen asleep. My once happy home is desolate. My hearth-stone is cold and deserted. Silence is within my habitation, and I am alone with my grief. There is an aching void here at my heart, and that heart, too, is wrenched, and all its fibres are torn and bleeding. O, once it was not a difficult thing to say and believe that God was good, — once, when all was joy and gladness and health and happiness, — once, when each day was filled to the full with comfort and blessing, — when the voices of wife, and children, and kindred fell as music on the ear! But now, ah! it seems a cruel, cruel blow. You tell me of the Infinite Mind, to which mine own is allied; but I need, — yes, to save me from the most bitter anguish of spirit, I need to know and realize an infinite love, which shelters me while it bruises me, which heals while it wounds, which gently wipes away the tears itself causes to flow. Is there such a love? My mind is burdened with doubt. Who shall relieve it? Who shall relieve it by showing me the Father, loving while he chastens, and chastening because he loves?

These are not uncommon states of mind, or occasional experiences of the heart. They are far more common than those lofty moods, when we are lifted near to the Great Soul of the universe, and feel the pulses of that living bond which binds us as children to the Holy God. And yet, in those highest states, when we meditate upon his wonderful attributes till their sublimity awes, sinks, humbles, the weak spirit, comes there not at times a doubt, — Can it be, that this sublime, majestic Being, this incomprehensible, all-glorious, all-holy Being, has thought and care for me, weak, erring

creature of yesterday, — of me, who so often disobey and neglect his laws, — of me, who am as nothing, and less than nothing? What shall dissipate that doubt, which, once excited, may deepen into the thickest gloom upon the soul, till all shall become as solid darkness there?

Yes, the great cry of humanity has ever been and will always be, "*Show* us the Father, and it sufficeth us. *Show* us, — not tell us, not teach us only, for all language is weak and inadequate on this great subject, — but *show* us the Father, and we can bear all things well; we can live calmly, endure patiently, labor resolutely, hope steadfastly, and conquer in the great struggle of life." And God hath most graciously answered that petition. He hath appeared unto man in the person of his Son. He hath veiled his glories in the flesh, and dwelt among men. He hath made his Son to be the perfect image of himself, the full, entire, complete manifestation of himself, as the Father. He hath sent him, so filled with his spirit, so endued with his perfections, made him so one with himself, that whosoever hath seen him hath seen the Father. He hath called upon all men to approach him through his Son, to love him as they love the Son, to confide and trust in him as they confide and trust in the Son. And what grace and mercy are here! Who shall approach unto the Infinite God? Is he not afar off? Are not clouds and darkness for ever around his throne? Is there not the distance between us and the Holy One of infinity and eternity? Are not his perfections incomprehensible by our poor, finite minds? Are they not too awful and sublime for our weak, trembling, sinful hearts to trust and confide in? But God is present with us when Christ is before our eyes. What Jesus was and did once in

Jerusalem and Judea, God is and does throughout the wide realms of his creation and providence. "No longer need man," — I quote the words of another, — "feel estranged by the immensity of the Ruler of heaven and earth, for also God was in Christ. Wherever the Gospel is read, there the key-note to the universe is sounded. Wherever Christ is known, there may the Father Almighty be understood. Yes, Christ is the Creator's representative among us. Mysterious and as yet only working itself out, the Father's providence is to be believed in, as identical with the Son's spirit. The disposition of Jesus, as developed in the study of the four Gospels, is really that of God himself. What Christ was among the tribes of Israel, God is evermore among all the nations of the earth. What Jesus was known to have been when his life in Judea was finished, God will also manifest himself to have been in the earth at the last day, when centuries shall have been all spent, and revolutions all summed up, and when the world's history shall be closed. O the faith concerning God, so joyous and full, which the Christian has! From land to land, from earth to heaven, from the centre to infinity, everywhere and throughout them, there glows an infinite affection, tender as that of Christ for the beloved disciple!"

And here we find the only and the sufficient source of confidence, trust, and tender reliance on the Almighty Creator and Infinite God. Here, in this great truth, Christ the manifestation of the Father, we find all we need to teach us to repose our whole soul on God. Christ shows us how near the Father comes to the human heart by coming so near himself, how we may trust in God by leading us to trust in himself, how we may

love God by drawing our tenderest affections so closely about himself.

In him we see a perfect image of the Father. Is there any doubt or fear now which is not relieved on the instant we look into the face of Jesus? What is the state of your heart, the mood of your mind? Are you oppressed, bowed down with care and anxiety? Are pains and many griefs resting heavily upon you? Are you discouraged, desponding, almost broken-hearted? And would you know how the Great God looks upon you? Have you any fear lest you be overlooked, unthought of, uncared for? Open your Bible, and read there of Jesus Christ; trace him along in his pilgrimages, behold him as he ministers to the weary and heavy-laden and gives them rest; learn there how he would meet you, with what interest he would speak to you, with what tenderness he would draw all the hurt out of your wounds; and then, when your heart yearns towards him, and feels that he is indeed your deliverer, — then remember that Jesus Christ, with all his comforting, considerate, strengthening sympathy, is also the manifestation of the Father's spirit of tenderness and love; and will not all doubt and fear depart, as your soul fills with a steady hope in God?

You are in deep affliction; your whole heart is steeped in bitterness; the light of your life has seemed to have gone out; the very idol of your heart is taken away, and there is a painful vacancy in your home. The wife, the child, dear to you as nothing on earth is dear to you, have bidden you farewell, and left you to struggle on alone through your pilgrimage. And does the question come, Is God good so to afflict me? He might have spared me, and he did not.

Is it a merciful Providence that has thus bereft me? And who shall answer this fearful question? What shall relieve the sinking heart? Words cannot; no teaching, no exhortation, can. Let such a man turn at once to Him who was the manifestation of the Father, — stand by his side, while, with tender compassion and deep sympathy, he mingles his tears with the weeping sisters of Bethany, — sit at his feet and look into his countenance while he speaks of the Father; let him lean his head on that compassionate bosom, while he says, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." And while the Saviour speaks he will be comforted; for it is the voice also of the Father whose image he was. Who can doubt the infinite pity of the Father, who has the heart to understand Jesus?

And yet, once more, you are oppressed by the consciousness of sin; you fear the Divine justice, lest it exact to the uttermost the penalty of your transgressions; you are just awakening from your dream of worldliness and irreligion. Conscience is regaining the ascendency in your soul, — its voice with its calm iterations is hushing to silence all other voices. A solemn sense of the immensity of the relations you sustain to God and immortality is falling weightily upon your deepest being. The past rises up to overwhelm you with bitterness, and the future opens to sink you in despair. You are feeling that you have sinned, and sinned against light, and warning, and entreaty, — sinned willingly and wilfully, — and hope shines from no quarter. There are such seasons in the experience of most of us, when we must think of God, and of ourselves as before him, and the laws of his justice come out in fearful distinctness in the cloudy

firmament on which the soul is looking, like lightning-flashes from the bosom of the storm; and there is fear and trembling, and asking for mercy and pardon. And what shall relieve us? Not any declarations of God's love, not any mere teachings, however wise and beautiful they may be, of God's compassion. If we have been relieved, or are to be relieved, it is only when we have opened the record of Christ's life, and seen him giving the whole earnestness of his soul, the intense love of his heart, in seeking and saving those who are lost; not casting the humblest penitent away, but pressing him to his bosom; not condemning the weeping sinner, but suffering her whose touch was deemed pollution to cling to his feet and bedew them with her tears, — tears, not of bitterness, but of gushing joy at the sense of her restoration and reconciliation with God; it is when we have seen this, and felt that this was but a visible manifestation of the Father's love and mercy, the urgency of his affection, towards his erring children everywhere, that we have opened our hearts unto God, and he has come and breathed upon them his own holy peace.

And why, suffer me to ask in this connection, has the cross of Christ such a saving power, — why has it such attractive influence? It is not, I think, because there we behold the last expression of the deep love of Christ. There have been other martyr deaths, nobly borne, — deaths of agony after lives of sweetest philanthropy, — but their blood speaketh not as the blood of Christ. No; the cross moves, attracts, saves, because it manifests the Father's love, — because his voice speaks from it in the broken utterances of his Son, his long-suffering in the patient endurance of his Well-beloved, his inexhaustible forgiveness in the prayer of

his Child. It is because men have seen the Father in the Son, that they have felt the strong, attractive power of the cross. Were it not for this, I see not how Christ's death would be more than any martyr's confession of faith, obedience to duty, and expression of love.

Yes, "This is deliverance indeed," — again I take up the words of another, — "to believe that evermore there is a presence round us like Christ's own; to believe, that, whatever our mood, happy or sorrowful, in remorse or in righteous aspiration, our homes have a spirit in them like that with which the Saviour's visit filled once the house of Lazarus. Infinite condescension, mercy inexhaustible, and love like the love of the Saviour, — these are over us and around us evermore, invisible, indeed, but for ever working out their all-blessed and all-blessing purposes. In the agony of repentance, when we could wish that hills and mountains would fall upon us, if they could hide us from our thoughts, there is an Eye always watching us, with emotions like those with which the Lord once looked on Peter. And in all our earthly circumstances, and in every spiritual vicissitude, there is with us, — if only through faith we will put ourselves in communion with it, — there is a sympathy, comforting, considerate, and strengthening, like Christ's was of old, and open to us every moment."

Christ the manifestation of the Father: I have called this the chief, cardinal doctrine of the Gospel, — the life, essence, of the Gospel. To my mind it is so, and would it were granted me to set it forth with the power with which it impresses me! I have seen it give all the comfort and inspiration which so richly dwell in it. I have seen it give new faith to the doubting, new hope to the desponding, new

strength to the weary, consolation to the mourner, and joyful assurance to the penitent. It makes the Gospels glow, throb, as with the pulses of life. It renews their interest continually. They cannot grow old and dull while we look there, not for the words of Christ only, but for himself much more. It kindles the soul's ardent affection for Christ, as he is felt to be a present Saviour. It brings us to God with a brighter faith and more earnest love, for also God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. The neglect of this doctrine has done much to make us cold and sluggish in all our spiritual affairs. Christ is not what he should be to us. We have contended for his words and works, and we did well; but we have not set forth *Christ* enough, as more than his words and works; we have not preached *him* as we should; we have preached *Christianity* too much as a system, but *Christ* too little; we have endeavoured to win men to his religion, too little to his person. And it has been a hard and toilsome matter. It is time all this were changed. But let us believe in Christ, receive *Christ*, as the manifestation of the Father, — receive him so with our whole soul. Receive him so, if we would have life and faith, if we would be filled with the love of the Master and his lofty service. Let us come to *Christ* and he will lead us to the Father, even as he said, "No man cometh to the Father but by me."

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THE LORD'S DAY.

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THE LORD'S DAY.

We propose to offer some views of the Christian Sabbath. We are not led to do so from any apprehensions that the Sabbath is about to be abolished. That event is not much nearer than it was eighteen hundred years ago. There will always be found people enough in the world who are sensible of the spiritual and civil advantages of such an institution to maintain it, — to say nothing of the conservative power of reverence for antiquity, for authority, and for an observance sanctioned by the venerable usage of wise and good men for centuries. In fact, any observance, once established, has a natural attribute of self-preservation. It perpetuates itself by a force of its own nature; it is extremely hard to root it out from the interlacing and overgrowing affections and habitudes of mankind in which it is once imbedded. And for this reason we should expect that the general observance of the Sabbath would hold its place for many generations to come, even if it had not an abundance of higher and stronger grounds to support it, and an immovable foundation in its adaptedness to the spiritual wants of humanity.

Although we are not directed to the subject, therefore,

by the fear that it is likely to incur any serious damage, we cannot think it untimely to bring forward a few considerations bearing on the character and proper observance of the Lord's day.

One of the points that is often made, or is attempted to be made, a stumbling-block in connection with the observance of the Lord's day is its supposed dependence on the Jewish Sabbath. This seems to be raking among the ashes of dead and buried institutions for the materials of a controversy. Is it possible, then, that any enlightened person in this community can need to be told, at this day, that the Jewish Sabbath was a wholly national and ceremonial institution? Does not every body know, that it begun and ended with the Hebrew nationality, — that it was as totally distinct from our Lord's day, both in the authority of positive precept on which it rested, and in the mode in which it was kept, as the temple of Jerusalem was from a modern meeting-house, — and that we have no more to do with that ancient ritual ordinance than we have with the Feast of Tabernacles, or the rite of circumcision? We first hear of the Jewish Sabbath as being established in the wilderness while the children of Israel were on their pilgrimage from Egypt to the Promised Land. It was provided, among a multitude of other specific regulations, for the special benefit of the Israelites. There is no indication that it ever was meant to extend beyond them. Subsequently to this, the author of the Pentateuch, writing the history of the creation in the book of Genesis, naturally enough connects this event with the Almighty's completion of the work of creation, by an inference of his own. After Christ came and substituted the spiritual faith of the Gospel for the ceremo-

nial law of the Hebrews, the Jewish Sabbath, along with other ritual provisions, vanished. It may have *suggested* to the early Christians the idea of a weekly observance in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus. The division of time being by weeks, such an observance would of course naturally fall on every seventh day. And this was the only dependence we can trace, either in the Scriptures or out of them, of the Christians' Lord's day on the Jews' Sabbath. Indeed, if we needed any other evidence to show how entirely separate and distinct the first Christians regarded the two, we should find it in the fact, that for a considerable time they continued to observe *both*, — the one on the last or seventh day of the week, and the other on the first.

All this is as well known and familiar as the most common facts of Biblical history. And it must naturally occasion some surprise, therefore, when we find persons deeming it necessary to embarrass the discussion of the subject, if not positively to discredit and obstruct the regular observance of the day, by continual reference to the old Rabbinical excesses of three thousand years ago, and dwelling dolorously over them, and protesting and cautioning people against them. As if we were in any possible danger of falling back into those antiquated extremes! as if the whole tendency of our times were not in exactly the opposite direction,— towards a lax and careless treatment of holy time! as if the men and women of this age were in any danger of reviving such Sabbatical customs as those which forbade the kindling of a fire, or the riding or walking beyond a single mile, or even the singing of psalms, or the doing of any thing which by any possible construction could be called

labor, under penalty of death! Are there any indications that we are in imminent peril of returning to the absurd minutiæ, the superstitious follies, the ceremonial scruples, of the Hebrew Rabbins? If there are, then by all means let society be put on its guard; but if there are no such indications, then let us not waste time and breath in protesting against an outworn and outgrown evil. It is characteristic of true reformers — comprehensive and far-sighted reformers — to resist and expose and overthrow real and present evils, — evils that beset the present age and threaten living men; not those that died their natural death long before we or our fathers were born, and that have no chance of ever being resuscitated.

So precisely of the Puritanical observance of the Sabbath. Doubtless it was over-rigid, and in some cases fostered insincerity and hypocrisy. But what then? The lapse of two centuries makes a change in the aspect and tendencies of a community. Society in 1848 is not surely what society was in 1648. The period that followed the Restoration in England required a different kind of preaching from the stiff, precise, and formal period of the Protectorate. It will not be desirable to renew all the Sabbatical notions of our worthy ancestors. But there is very little occasion for saying this at present; less need of it, indeed, than there is for saying that in many respects we should do well to adhere more closely to those ancestral usages, and that in some quarters the very best thing to be done would be to copy our forefathers' example.

In both the Jewish and the Puritanical modes of observing the Sabbath, a fair and appreciating man will find much to reverence, when he considers the condition of those times.

and the sort of dangers and evils they had to contend with. He might well begin to suspect himself of narrowness and one-sidedness in the other direction, if he did not see something to reverence in them. Christ himself, who understood them on every account far better than we, felt a certain degree of respect for the Jewish observances. We read, that "he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, *as his custom was*." Doubtless the main idea of the Hebrews' Sabbath was cessation from work, rest from bodily exertion. But they also doubled their offerings to God on that day; they held their holy convocation, and had exercises of worship. It cannot be otherwise than salutary for us, in this hurrying, breathless, and money-getting time, to break in upon the eager service of mammon and the race for outside emoluments, by one day in seven of entire release from toil, to redouble our spiritual offerings to the Almighty, and to go gladly to his devout worship in the congregation of believers, in the cordial fellowship and brotherhood of the sanctuary.

We have said, that the Jewish Sabbath, as such, was wholly national. At the same time, there is an argument for the keeping of *some such day* as this, independent of the Scriptures, but valid to any believer in the providential course of history. Looking into that history from the beginning, is it rational to doubt that a provision, in behalf of mankind, for a season of rest from bodily labor and earthly care, embracing about one seventh portion of the time, entered into the original constitution and divine arrangement of mortal affairs? Is it to be supposed that a custom of such permanency, such extent, and so closely connected with the best progress of the world, is wholly a matter of

accident? It is not thus that enlightened and reverent students of the philosophy of human events interpret significant and lasting usages. Without minute specifications as to its exact frequency or methods, we must regard the existence of this institution, in a general form, as properly and strictly providential.

We have alluded to the example of Christ. It is plain from his biographies, that he meant to supplant the Pharisaic and ceremonial notion of the Sabbath that had come to prevail then, and to introduce a more spiritual conception of its uses. It is a time, he would teach us, for enlarging the soul, strengthening its powers, cultivating its better affections, drawing its attachment to pure, high, and heavenly things, binding it more firmly to principle and duty, and replenishing its treasures of faith, hope, and love. This, he shows us, is a Christian Sabbath. It is implied in his declaration, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." The human soul is greater than any institution. The worth and dignity of its spiritual nature outweigh all external forms and observances. These forms and observances are devised and designed only for its help, as means and instruments for the soul's purification and advancement. They have no ceremonial efficacy, nor any efficacy or value of any sort, except as they foster and promote this spiritual culture. When Jesus healed the sick and the sufferer on the Sabbath, and sent them rejoicing on their way in health restored, he knew that he was fulfilling the legitimate purpose for which the Father intended the day to be kept. And therefore he rebuked the hypocritical pretenders who accused him of breaking the Sabbath by such acts of mercy. And thus he teaches *us* that one of the truest

ways of keeping the day rightly and nobly is to do works of humanity, — to employ it for deeds of charity, for helping the weak, visiting the poor, instructing the ignorant, and comforting the sorrowful. So when Jesus and his disciples, engaged in their great and holy ministry, were going on one of their quiet missionary journeys through Palestine, and some of them gathered the grain as they passed on and ate it, he justifies it to the carping Pharisees by showing them that the holy work in which he was engaged was of far more consequence to the world than a literal interpretation of their statutes ; he tells them that, like David, who ate the shewbread, and the priests in the temple, he held an office that was far above their minute and petty routine of formalities, — "In this place is one greater than the temple" ; he tells them that humanity and true religion have a loftier reach and a broader vision than they had conceived of, — that the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath ; and he adds, with sublime and searching emphasis, "If ye, censorious Pharisees, had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy rather than sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." But at the same time Jesus never wounded any just feeling of reverence for the Sabbath. The spirit that was in him could reveal no spite or prejudice or jealousy, even at the misunderstanding and abuse of it. He acquiesced in its observance with his countrymen, frequented the synagogues, but left it to the spiritual truths he announced to effect a gradual removal of this, like the other mere ritual provisions of the law, and to establish a more Christian and improving institution in its place.

That institution appeared. It is our Lord's day. It was appointed by the first apostles, and in special commemora-

tion of the day when Christ arose from the dead. Its main, central idea, therefore, was that of the resurrection, an event the most joyful and the most sublime that all history has known. It fell on the first day of the week. We find it repeatedly mentioned in the book of Acts, that the disciples came together to remember their Master, to renew their zeal, to rekindle their affection, to honor their faith, and give thanks to God, on the first day of the week. And ever since, from that early day to this, in one unbroken succession of observances, the Christian Church of all names and sects has paid its united and concordant homage to that benignant and blessed appointment. Christians have with singular unanimity remembered the Sabbath day to keep it holy. With different measures of wisdom, and different degrees of knowledge, but always with a noble and devout principle at the foundation, they have hallowed every seventh day. Neither the godless decades of revolutionary France, nor the violating amusements or business of unbelieving worldliness, have availed in the least to break down that mighty safeguard of religion, or to disturb its essential sanctity. Like the golden links of a chain that is intertwisted with all the best customs and institutions and governments and life of Christendom, these Christian Sabbaths run back, through countless generations of faithful and earnest souls, to the broken tombstone in the garden of Gethsemane, to the cross on Calvary, and bind our Christian hope of to-day to the sure and steadfast anchor there.

And now, inasmuch as this venerable and beneficent observance is to stand and continue, must stand, must be permanent, rooted as it is in all the best attachments of mankind, the only real question remaining is, How shall it be

kept? Of what kind and character shall this observance be? How shall the Lord's day be regarded and treated?

The only answer to this question that seems appropriate is, that the day shall be treated and kept as what it is, — the Lord's day; as the day specially set apart to the honor and remembrance of Him who is the Founder and Revealer and Example of our Christian faith. That is, it shall be devoted to such occupations and services and thoughts — let us not forget the thoughts — as will be especially Christian, especially in harmony with Christ's own spirit, especially in keeping with his life, actions, and teachings. Whatever we can discover that is peculiarly Christ-like, that is peculiarly benevolent, righteous, devout, prayerful, that let us take peculiar pains to do on the Lord's day, and to fill up the Lord's day with such doings. It is such deeds and thoughts, — and only such, — that will make the time truly hallowed, and it is with such sacrifices that God is well pleased.

Of course, all such observance must be voluntary. It must spring from the heart, or it is nothing worth. Religion cannot be forced. Right sentiments and affections can only be awakened by having their true objects presented to them. Of course, therefore, no legal enactments can ever secure the right observance of the Sabbath.

The only legitimate office of a civil statute in relation to the Sabbath is in securing to those who desire conscientiously to pursue these Christian objects the needed facilities, and exemption from interruption and interference. Any practice, pursuit, or amusement that prevents the enjoyment of public Christian privileges, or disturbs the Christian quiet and order of the day, furnishes a proper subject for legal

restraint and interdiction. It is difficult to see how a Christian legislature or magistracy or judiciary could do less than impose and enforce such restraints. Beyond that point jurisdiction ceases.

If there are any persons who would wish to introduce a more lax state of things than obtains at present in this regard, they must desire to make one or more of three changes; either to have secular business continued on the Sabbath as on week days, — or to have the day devoted to secular education, as the giving of general information and literary or scientific lectures, or instruction in the schools, instead of moral and religious instruction and worship as now, — or else to resign the day to promiscuous amusements and entertainments. As to the first, the throwing open of our shops, banks, factories, farms, and streets to all the usual occupations, bustle, toil, business, and confusion of the week, we doubt if even the most absorbed and sordid devotee of gain-getting, on mature consideration, would lift a finger to effect it. Of labor and traffic every body feels that we have abundance already. The rest, the relief, the stillness, are too incalculably precious to every class in the community, rich and poor, idle and industrious, sick and sound, to allow of their being relinquished. With regard to the second, it would probably be ascertained after a very short experiment, if not before, indeed, by the majority, that of all kinds of secular information, scientific, literary, and miscellaneous, whether by schools or lectures, we have as full a supply in the six days as will sustain a fitting proportion to our progress in other things, such as the domestic, moral, and industrial character. We have institutions for such purposes, open to the poorest

and least-privileged classes. And, besides, do not the poor and all other classes need the Lord's day quite as much for their moral and spiritual training, for distinctly religious uses, for self-examination and advancement in righteousness, and even more for these than for merely mental discipline? As to the third point, that the Sabbath might be abandoned to general relaxation and entertainment, that project could be advocated only by those who are unfortunately short-sighted as to the results of such an experiment, or those — very few, it is to be hoped — who are recklessly indifferent to the public order and welfare. It is a matter of familiar observation, that our secular holidays develop more depravity, and exhibit more overt iniquity, by dissipation and crime, than any other portion of the year. What constitutes the distinction between these and the Sabbath, and the special charm of the latter, is the religious reverence and restraint that attach to it. It needs but a dim and short foresight to see that you have only to dissolve that restraint, to secularize the day, to reduce it to the level of other holidays, and extend the sanction of public opinion to Sabbath amusements, and the peculiar charm of sobriety, calmness, and tranquillity, to say nothing of sanctity, is banished for ever. Such is the inevitable tendency. It is easy to open floodgates, but hard to shut them. Let that which is appropriately called the *religious* character of the day be suspended, or give place to general amusement, and our only alternative is the European Sabbath of games and theatrical exhibitions, or, perhaps, a little later, the South American Sabbath, where the lay customs gradually infect what are called by courtesy the ministers of religion, and

the Catholic priests say mass in the morning and attend the bull-fight or the race-course in the afternoon.

That word *priests*, as well as the course of these remarks, suggests another thought. We should esteem it a sort of insult to the understanding of our readers, and an impeachment of their common sense, to caution them against allowing the Sabbath and its ministrations to be turned into an instrument of priestly domination over their judgments and opinions. We can conceive nothing more melancholy and deplorable than such domination, unless it is the infirmity of intellect and servility of spirit on the part of the people which should render it possible, and should leave them so far exposed to its mischief, that they required to have their eyes opened and their minds put on the alert to escape it. The class of men who do the discoursing and conduct the public exercises of worship on the Sabbath are the ministry. If, at this late day, and in this Protestant community, the laity are so far gone in a want of independence and intelligence, that this class of men can use any spells or incantations or magic upon them, or can exert any particle of influence upon them over and above the natural and legitimate influence of educated and earnest minds, the influence of sincerity and study, of clear argument and rational persuasion, and of character, then, I say, there is little to be hoped for of this generation; then let church-steeples be toppled down, and their walls be beaten in, and the pulpit give place to the lecture-stand, and the Lord's day no longer profane the Lord's name, and let the Sabbath be buried among the rubbish relics of decayed and dethroned superstitions.

We shall never cease to need the Lord's day for those

purposes and uses which are distinctly and specifically religious. Our religious nature demands it, and a just spiritual economy cannot afford to relinquish it. Not so much for its indirect benefits to our civil, our educational, our industrial, and our domestic condition and character, — important and incalculable as those benefits are, — yet not so much for either or all of these do we need it, as for its direct supplies and helps to our spiritual growth, and our enlargement in Christian excellence. Occupied and engrossed as we are for six days of every week in things mostly external and temporal, we do surely need one at least of the seven wholly for things pertaining to our inmost, our deepest, our immortal and eternal natures. Let us not ask to take it from the soul, and give it over either to the intellect or the senses. Let it be marked out, set apart, made holy, different from all other days, — the best of them all, the highest and happiest of them all, — by its tranquil meditations on great truths, by its joyful converse of heart with heart, by its animating hopes of immortality, by its noble resolves and fervent prayers for righteousness and the coming of Christ's kingdom, by cheerful and hearty labors to gladden the sorrowful, to minister to poverty, to bless the lonely, to lift up the fallen, to break every yoke of sin and slavery, and set those that are oppressed free. This will be indeed a Christian Sabbath, a Lord's day.

When men tell us of the necessity of secularizing the Sabbath, or opening it to amusement and recreation, in order to relieve it of that gloomy and sombre aspect which it was supposed to wear formerly, they discover that, whatever they may say of the need of making piety cheerful and light-hearted, they do not yet understand that religion

really is cheerful and light-hearted of itself. True religion cannot be otherwise. It is only a false, spurious sort that is dull. If these persons really appreciated the essential gladness and peace of a rational and trusting faith, they would see that the more purely spiritually-minded men are, the happier they are ; and that the less religious the Sabbath is made, the less truly happy it is made. Turn the day into a season of public recreation, and a far greater number of families and individuals will be made wretched and sad by the change, than cheerful and thankful. In the heart of every truly devout worshipper, there is a quiet joy and a profound satisfaction and a peace of conscience which shed a far clearer sunshine, and more lasting, too, than any worldling's pleasure or student's enthusiasm.

One of the devout old English poets justly teaches us the real joys of holy time : —

> " Who scorn the hallowed day set heaven at naught.
> Heaven would wear out when one short Sabbath tires.
> Emblem and earnest of eternal rest,
> A festival with fruits celestial crowned,
> A jubilee, releasing him from earth,
> The day delights and animates the saint.
> It gives new vigor to the languid pulse
> Of life divine, restores the wandering feet,
> Strengthens the weak, upholds the prone to slip,
> Quickens the lingering, and the sinking lifts,
> Establishing them all upon a rock.
> Sabbaths, like way-marks, cheer the pilgrim's path,
> His progress mark, and keep his rest in view.
> In life's bleak winter they are pleasant days,
> Short foretastes of the long, long spring to come.
> To every new-born soul each hallowed morn
> Seems like the first, when every thing was new ;

Time seems an angel come afresh from heaven,
His pinions shedding fragrance as he flies,
And his bright hour-glass running sands of gold."

Not that we would pronounce the present mode of observing the day in all respects what it ought to be. God forbid! In many ways we sadly need improvement. Above all do we need such a quickening of our Christian sympathies, such an enlarging of our fellowship, and good feeling, and active charity, that those multitudes of young men and young women in our cities, who are almost homeless and quite churchless, — who wander in streets or lounge in indolence, or, far worse, haunt the places of temptation, dissoluteness, and ruin, — who find the day, for obvious reasons, the most perilous of all the week, instead of the most blessed and saving, — who squander God's holy time and holiest treasures — peace of mind, and health of body, and sacred principle, and heavenly purity, and noble self-control, and the dear memories and hallowed teachings of childhood and home — in resorts of infamy, — that these might be taken by the hand, be spoken to in tones of brotherly kindness, be encouraged in better ways, be led by our fraternal invitations into our sanctuaries of worship, and seated by our sides, to thank the common Father and commemorate the common Saviour of us all. Would to Heaven this might be, — this beautiful and glorious spectacle! Shall it not some time be realized? On you, Christians of abundant privileges and favoring opportunities, who have yourselves tasted of the waters of life, — on you rests the great responsibility; on you it depends whether that Christian obligation be fulfilled.

Above all, and by all means, and for your own souls'

sake and your greatest good, let not the day lose its distinctively religious character, and a religious observance. Hold that fast for its incomparable blessings. Do not disturb the sacred charm that has gathered about the venerable name of the Sabbath through successive centuries by its being kept holy, holy unto the Lord, by all believing and Christian souls. From end to end of Christendom, from side to side of the round world, meek and trustful followers of Him who was crucified and rose the third day have greeted the auspicious light of Sabbath mornings, have seen their suns rise with benedictions, and have sent up their prayers of faith, like world-wide incense, to consecrate the hours. They have knelt to breathe those prayers in the caverns and deserts and solitary places of the East, in vast temples and cathedrals, in dark cells of monasteries and the prisons of captives, in hospitals of suffering and the happy cottages of contented peasants, in poor men's huts and lordly palaces, by sick beds and at the side of the dead, in the frosty retreats of persecution under the cold and open sky of the Swiss Alps, and on the bleak and stony hill-sides of Scotland, and in the fair and free sanctuaries of New England, and the sincere offering of every obscurest saint has added holiness to the holy memories of the time.

Remember it, then, to keep it holy. Set it apart, in all your thoughts of it, and associations with it, and employments of it, — set it apart from all other days. Let it stand a perpetual witness of the reality and power of invisible and spiritual things. In all your family customs and household arrangements, let it begin and end as a Christian Sabbath, as the Lord's day. Let all common and unnecessary

work be suspended. Let every thing that interferes with its great object be avoided. Do not waste it in sleepy idleness, nor stupefy yourselves with luxurious feastings, nor violate it by worldly labors, nor profane it by irreligious conversation. Let children be taught to revere it, and to lay aside the week-day studies and sports. Let it be understood that different books are to be read from those they read on ordinary days, different pleasures enjoyed, different subjects talked of. And let pains be taken to make those books and pleasures and subjects interesting and engaging. Do your best endeavour to make that Sabbath family circle attractive and delightful. Wear a cheerful countenance and a kind heart. Offer your prayers and thanksgivings gladly to your Maker, and speak happily of his goodness, and benevolently of your fellow-men, and hopefully of the future. Kept thus, and taught to be kept thus, in the quiet, cheerful Christian home, it will be looked forward to with pleasurable expectation; its light will descend like a gentle gift from heaven, its sun will go down in peace, leaving a treasure of generous and devout affections in your breast, and its spirit will remain, — without this, it will be of little worth, — its spirit will remain, to go with you your six days' journey of the week, to mingle itself with your just and innocent labors, to guard you from evil, to heighten your enjoyments, to purify and ennoble your life.

In concluding, let us briefly indicate, in a practical form, two ways in which the Sabbath may be kept, by placing before us two individual examples, leaving it to be decided which has the more respectability and dignity, — which is Christian and right, — which we would desire and strive to imitate.

Of the two men we have in mind, one regards the Lord's day as simply an interruption of his weekly business. His only resolution is to get as much indolent repose or sensual gratification out of it as he can make it yield. He follows his worldly plans to the last moment of a late Saturday evening, without any preparation or thought for the sacred duties of the morrow. He lengthens his sleep far into the Sabbath, and rises stupid, and perhaps irritable, — too late, it may be, for attendance on public worship, — or if he goes there at all, out of some formal or superficial motive, he goes hurriedly and confusedly, or tardily, without a ready mind, laying down as it may be a newspaper or a work of fiction as he starts, instead of a Bible, — and discussing on the way and in the porch the business or the fashions of the week, the last steamer's mercantile news, or the last record in chancery. With a sluggish or wandering attention, he sits out the services, feeling no glow of love kindled for God or man. On leaving the church he resumes the projects or the gossip of the week. The next principal occasion is his dinner. The hour's interval he saunters away by a needless visit to the post-office. After a somewhat surfeiting repast, the remainder of the holy day is given either to sleeping or riding, and the evening to the profitless society of some kindred spirits, as thoughtless and as earthly-minded as himself. Thus closes that misspent, squandered day. Thus has the deluded man cheated his own soul, dishonored his humanity, wronged his fellow-creatures, and affronted his God.

Turn to the other. He greets the coming of the Sabbath with eagerness. He looks gladly for it, as a release from cares and anxieties, which, if they were never broken.

would narrow and belittle his nature. Early on Saturday evening he withdraws himself from his toil into his own home. He gathers his household together, and speaks to them of the goodness of the Father in the preservations of the week, and if there are children to be aided for the religious studies of the Sunday School, he encourages them in their preparation. With promptness and a clear head he meets the Sabbath morning, and in a regular and undisturbed house engages in some reading or reflection congenial to the objects of the day before him. When he goes to the sanctuary, it is only to continue the tone of feeling he has already called up, to gain fresh impulses to his resolves, his faith, and his hope, to quicken his feelings of fellowship for mankind, and to offer brief and cordial salutations to such as he meets by the way. Directly to the house of God, and directly from it, morning and afternoon, his path leads him into no temptations to frivolity or worldliness; and his family keep him company. The hours not devoted to worship are passed in that best and dearest of all spots to him, his Christian home, in agreeable and easy and familiar talk on engaging and improving topics, in devising plans to interest variously the younger members of the household, in telling them of the great and good movements that are going on in the world for the benefit of mankind, of the great and good men and women that have lived, and in explaining the infinite beauties and wonders of the Almighty's works and word. If he goes abroad, it is to continue to the more advantage these trains of instruction and quiet enjoyment under God's open sky, or else to carry some friendly message of counsel or teaching, or some gift of charity, to the poor, and the ignorant, and the

depraved of his neighbourhood. Has not this man had his daily bread, in that peace and refreshment which descend from heaven? On such a Sabbath will not the God of Sabbaths look down with love, and leave his blessing on that habitation?

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CHARGES OF UNBELIEF.

The most common accusation made against Unitarians is, that they are *unbelievers*. This is no new charge, as brought by one Christian denomination against another. It is often, and very easily, said by one controversialist against another, that he is an infidel, or an unbeliever. And the charge generally amounts to this, that one denies what the other believes. Each insists on the particular doctrine which he makes prominent as the great central truth of the Gospel, and says, and perhaps thinks, that his opponent, if he denies that, might as well deny the whole Gospel.

This is precisely the case in the present instance. It is said of us that we do not believe in Christ. This is an equivocal expression. It may mean, that we do not believe that any such person ever lived. It may mean, that we put no confidence in what he said, — that he was not what he pretended to be, or what his disciples afterwards pretended he had been. It may mean, and does probably mean, that we do not believe that he was God.

The phraseology is sometimes varied, and it is said that we do not believe in *the Divinity of Christ*. This is again

an equivocal aspersion. It may mean that his person, or that his words and actions, were divine. It may mean that he was Jehovah, the only living and true God. In that case, the proper expression would be, that we do not believe in the *Deity* of Christ.

If Christ was not God, then we may believe in him, and believe in him to the saving of the soul, and still not believe that he *was* God. The whole question as to what is a true faith in Christ turns upon the question, whether he were God or not.

In order to settle this question, we must go to the Scriptures and inquire what the Apostles believed concerning him. The first convert to a belief in Christ was Peter. And what was his confession of faith? According to Matthew, it was, — "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And what meant Peter by this? Did he mean to make any assertion concerning the *nature* of Christ, or merely his office? The very phrase does not assert, but denies, Deity. A Son of God cannot be God, for three reasons, — because he is derived, because he cannot be eternal, and because he must be separate from God. But so far is the second clause, "the Son of the living God," from making an important part of Peter's confession of faith, that the other two Evangelists who have related this confession, Mark and Luke, have left it out altogether. Mark records that he merely said, "Thou art the Christ," and Luke, "The Christ of God." The meaning of Christ is *anointed*. The anointed of God *cannot* be God. If the second clause, "the Son of the living God," had contained the essence of Peter's confession, relating to the return of Christ, Mark and Luke certainly would not have left it out. We may safely

say, then, that the confession of Peter had no relation to the nature of Christ, but only to his office.

But Peter must be allowed to be the best interpreter of his own language. Peter, after the resurrection of Christ, was sent, by especial commission, to convert Cornelius, and teach him the first principles of the Christian religion; and the faith which he propounds to Cornelius concerning Christ is this: — "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for *God was with him.* And we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew, and hanged on a tree: *him God raised up* the third day, and showed him openly." The anointing of Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power did not prove him to be God. It rather proved him not to be God. Had he been God he would not have needed, nor could he have received, such an anointing. Neither do crucifixion and being raised from the dead agree with the supposition that Christ was God.

Now this is precisely the Unitarian belief concerning Jesus of Nazareth, — that God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power, endowed him with that transcendent and unapproachable wisdom which he exhibited, gave him the supernatural knowledge that he possessed, communicated to him the sublime and perfect doctrine that he taught, sealed his mission by the miracles which he performed, and, when the Jews and Romans had murdered him upon the cross, raised him from the dead and showed him to his disciples, that they might be the witnesses of these stupen-

dous events, on which our religion is founded, to that and all succeeding ages.

With what propriety, then, can Unitarians be denounced as unbelievers in Christ, when they believe concerning him the very thing which Peter did, who was blessed by his Master and called the foundation stone of the Christian Church? Belief in Christ has nothing to do with his nature, but only with his mission, — whether God did or did not anoint him with the Holy Ghost, did or did not raise him from the dead.

Paul takes the same view of this subject in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians: — "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." Here, then, the main point of Christian faith is not that Christ was God, but that God had raised him from the dead. That Christ was God, and that God raised him from the dead, are totally different propositions.

And why was a belief in the resurrection of Christ so important? Paul tells us in the first chapter of Romans: — "Declared to be the Son of God," or the Messiah, "with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

It is objected to Unitarians, that they rely too much on *human reason;* that they set up reason in opposition to Scripture, and in opposition to faith. Let us examine this matter, and see if this charge be just. What is the relation of reason to Scripture and to faith?

We say, then, that the use of reason is necessary to determine whether the Scriptures are to be received as a divine revelation; and when they are received, the use of reason is necessary to find out what they teach; and in the third place, faith, instead of being opposed to reason, is built upon it.

In the first place, reason is the only means which God has given us of distinguishing what is true from what is false, what is probable from what is improbable, what is to be believed from what is not to be believed. The New Testament is given us, and we read it. There is no way for us to determine whether it is true or false, but by the use of our reason. If we must receive the New Testament merely because it is placed before us, then the Mahometan is just as much compelled to receive the Koran because it is placed before him.

A man says that he receives the New Testament as a divine revelation. Another asks him, Why? He then goes on to give his reasons. He says that the narrative is natural, and bears the marks of truth. That is, it resembles other narratives which he knows to be true. The comparison of that narrative with other narratives is the work of reason, and the inference he draws from it is the work of reason. He says, that Paul and Peter and John, and the other Apostles, would not have consumed their lives and finally sacrificed them in testifying to a falsehood. This inference is an act of reason. Faith in the New Testament, then, is built on reason. And if it were not, it would be mere credulity.

In the second place, we must use reason in finding out what the Bible teaches. All sects do this, even those who

disclaim reason most vehemently. All sects use it till it begins to press upon their peculiar doctrines, and then they discard it. The Catholic uses it. He reads in the New Testament where Christ calls himself a "vine." Is he to receive this literally or figuratively? If he is not allowed to use reason, he must believe that Christ was literally a *vine*, that he was planted in the earth and had roots and branches: and the only reason he can give why he does not so receive it is, that it is not reasonable to believe that this was Christ's meaning. Upon the strength of reason he rjeects the literal meaning. But when he comes to the passage, "This is my body," he refuses to use his reason, and says that this assertion must be interpreted literally, and he must believe that it was the real flesh of Christ. The Trinitarian Protestant insists on using his reason in the same way, in this case, that the Catholic did in regard to the assertion of Christ that he was a vine. He judges that it is more reasonable to believe that Christ meant to say, that the bread represented his body, as his body was present unbroken and unchanged.

But there is a limit to *his* application of reason to the interpretation of Scripture, as well as to the Catholic's. Christ said, on a certain occasion, — "I and the Father are one." He insists that this passage must be interpreted literally, that God and Christ are one being. You ask him how two beings can be one being, and he answers that he does not pretend to explain it. It is a mystery, and must be received notwithstanding its repugnance to reason. But he would not allow the Catholic to make the same plea in favor of the doctrine of transubstantiation.

The Unitarian goes on to apply reason to the interpreta-

tion of *this* passage also. He inquires if the same writer do not employ the same word in cases where no identity of being is intended. He reads on a few chapters, and he finds the Saviour praying for his disciples in these words, — "that they all may be one." And in the next verse he specifies the sense in which they were to be one to be the same with that in which he had applied the same expression to himself and God, — "That they may be one, even as we are." If the expression be allowed to prove that God and Christ were numerically one, then the same expression must be allowed to prove that God and Christ and the disciples were all one being.

The only difference, then, that there is between the Unitarian and other Christians is, that he applies reason to the interpretation of *all* the Scriptures, whereas they do only to a part. Without the use of reason, revelation would be useless; for we could never know what was revealed and what was not revealed, what was figurative and what literal. If it be meant by placing reason *above* Scripture, that, when reason and Scripture come in conflict, we believe reason in preference to Scripture, we deny that any such case ever happened or ever can happen, for we affirm that the Scriptures teach nothing that is not perfectly reasonable, when they are properly interpreted.

Revelation teaches more, and on higher evidence, than reason. If it did not, it would be wholly useless and superfluous. If it added nothing to what we knew before, it could do us no good. Reason teaches the *probability* of a future life; but the assurance of Christ, and his own resurrection, make it certain. But it is only by the use of reason that we can ever arrive at the well-grounded conviction, that

Christ ever uttered such an assurance, or ever rose from the dead. It is only by the use of reason that the accounts of the supernatural events recorded in the New Testament can be separated and distinguished from the thousand other accounts of supernatural events which have been handed down to us from the past. Accordingly, every book that has ever been written on the evidences of Christianity is a recital of the *reasons* we have for believing the supernatural accounts of the Old and New Testament, and rejecting all others. These books are addressed to the reasoning faculty of man. If the reasoning is not satisfactory, the revelation has no authority. We go farther, and say, that it is reason only which can give us confidence in a revelation, even when we are convinced that one has been made. The truth of revelation, even when it is made, depends upon the veracity of God, — upon the question whether it is probable that he would or would not deceive us. The probability that he would not deceive us depends entirely upon the fact, whether he be a good being. And the only evidence we have that he is a good being is the predominance of good over evil in his works, or of happiness over misery in the creatures he has made. The representation is not *true*, then, that Unitarians set up reason in opposition to Scripture, and in opposition to faith. They make use of reason for the establishment of Scripture, and for the establishment of faith. They make use of reason for the interpretation of Scripture, that they may ascertain what it teaches and what it does not teach.

It is objected to Unitarians, that they expect to be saved by *their own merits*, whereas the only ground of salvation

is the merits of Chrsit. Both parts of this objection are founded on misapprehension. There is no such thing mentioned in the Scriptures as being saved by the merits of Christ. There is no such phrase in the Scriptures as "the merits of Christ." There is no intimation that the merits of Christ, whatever they might have been, can by any possibility become the merits of any other person. Merit is a thing which can no more be transferred than personal identity. If merit could be transferred from one person to another, then this world, as a scene of probation, might be dispensed with. Salvation must either be arbitrary or universal. All that would be necessary to be done for the worst of men, when he leaves the world, is for the merits of Christ to be set to his account, and then his condition would be as good as that of the best. Christ never made mention of any such plan of salvation as that. He made no promise of the transfer of his personal merits to his followers. There is no way in which a bad man can become a good man, except by his personal acts. A bad man cannot become a good man without repentance, which is a personal act. A bad man cannot become a good man without reformation, that is, without obedience. Accordingly, the first word which Christ uttered was, "Repent." In the first sermon he delivered, he pronounced blessings on the humble, the meek, the pure in heart, the merciful, the peacemakers, the persecuted for righteousness' sake; and assured them that the kingdom of heaven was theirs, — they would be for ever happy. These things were not the merits of Christ. They were all personal qualities, which *fitted* them for the happiness of heaven. He did not come to substitute reliance on his merits, in the place of obedience to

God's law, for final acceptance. "Think not," said he, in the same discourse, "that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Does this look like being saved by the merits of Christ?

The next verse informs us of the nature and degree of that righteousness which was to fit Christ's disciples for the kingdom of heaven. First he tells them of the kind and degree of righteousness which the Scribes and Pharisees thought necessary, and then tells them what he requires: — "I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.". What was their righteousness? "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." Luke reports that he added, — "And your reward shall be great." Your reward for what?

Certainly not the merits of Christ, but the cultivation and practice of the Christian virtues just enumerated, kindness, forbearance. He winds up this enumeration of Christian virtues by saying, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Now it cannot be said that God is perfect by any other righteousness except his own, and if man is perfect by Christ's merits, then his perfection is not of the same kind with that of God. The perfection of God had just been specified: — "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

After proposing as the laws of his kingdom the whole circle of the most exalted virtues, Christ closes with the following declarations: — "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it." Nothing is here said of the merits of Christ as a ground of salvation. The reason of acceptance is not the appropriating of his merits, but doing his commandments. In another place he describes the general judgment, but says nothing of his merits as the ground of discrimination between those on his right hand and on his

left. In another place he says, — "They that have *done good* shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of condemnation."

Yet notwithstanding these representations, no Unitarian believes, nor preaches, that any man can *demand* salvation on account of his good works; because his best works are unperfect, and he often sins. For acceptance of his best deeds, he must rely on the benignity of God, for he has done no more than he was bound to do. For the forgiveness of his sins, he must be beholden to God's mercy. But such is God's goodness, that he has no doubt of either. This brings us to the only remaining charge against Unitarians which we propose to notice.

It is said of us, that we *deny the Atonement*. This charge is a difficult one to meet, because of its vagueness. It is difficult to find out what the doctrine of atonement is that we are accused of denying. There have been almost as many different schemes of atonement as there have been different writers upon the subject. Princeton says one thing; Andover another; Oberlin still differs from either.

The first and most common scheme of atonement is, that the sufferings of Christ were designed to appease the wrath of God. God was angry with men on account of the sin of Adam, as well as their own sins. God the Son, the second person of the Trinity, interposed to turn away his wrath, to receive in his own person the inflictions of God's vindictive displeasure, and thus rescue man from it. We do reject this scheme of atonement most distinctly and

emphatically. We say that it has no foundation in Scripture, and that it is inconsistent with the nature and character of God. It is, moreover, inconsistent with itself. On the supposition that the doctrine of the Trinity were true, sin is committed against God, the *whole Trinity*, — against one person as much as another. The second person cannot abandon his place in the Trinity and come on earth and make atonement to the whole Trinity, because he must be at the same time one of the persons of the Trinity to which the atonement is made. The very supposition upon which this scheme is raised is an impossibility, and therefore requires no further discussion.

The next scheme of atonement which we shall mention may be called "the satisfaction scheme." It is said that mankind had broken God's law, and thus impaired its authority. If men were pardoned merely on repentance, without the legal penalty being exacted from some one, the law would become a nullity, and no longer have power to control God's creatures. It was necessary that some one should be punished, lest the Deity should lose his dignity and respect. Every sin is an infinite evil, because committed against an infinite God. An infinite atonement is necessary to do away an infinite evil. It was necessary that Christ should be both God and man, in order to make an infinite sacrifice. But, unfortunately for this theory, those who adopt it are compelled to confess that God is incapable of suffering, so that the human part alone suffered, and the *infinite* atonement is at last explained away. Besides, Christ upon the cross exclaimed, — "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and with his last breath said, — "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." If

God made a part of his person, he could not have forsaken him. And if he remained to make the infinite atonement, that prayer did not correspond to facts. But this idea of satisfying the law is wholly gratuitous. Nothing is said of it in Scripture.

What, then, is the atonement, and in what sense do Unitarians believe in it? In the first place, I observe that the word is found but once in the New Testament, and then it is the translation of a Greek word everywhere else rendered *reconciliation*. Had it been here so translated, we should never have heard either of the word or the doctrine of atonement.

The simple facts of the case are these. A disobedient child is always at variance with his father. There can be no reconciliation, or at-one-ment, between them, until the son repents, reforms, and returns humbled and obedient to his father. Such is the condition of those whom Christ endeavoured to reconcile to God. Reconciliation is a voluntary act, and can be brought about only by *persuasion*. Christ was a teacher. His whole mission was teaching, in its largest sense. His death was the consequence of his teaching, and of his assumption of the office of the Messiah. The faith which he claimed from his disciples had nothing to do with his nature. It was, that he had been sent by God, and instructed and empowered to do what he did, and teach what he taught. That teaching was his principal office, he more than once asserts. "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not walk in darkness." Belief on him as a teacher was *the* belief which secured salvation. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on

him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." To his disciples he said, *before* his crucifixion, — "Now ye are clean, through the word that I have spoken unto you." It was his *doctrine*, then, not his death, which cleansed his disciples from sin. Indeed, Christ's death without his doctrines could have no influence upon the world, for men cannot be forgiven unless they repent. It is only by bringing men to repentance and obedience that he can be of any service to them. To reject him as a teacher is to reject him altogether. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, that shall judge him at the last day. For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father, which hath sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak, and I know that his commandment is life everlasting."

One part of Christ's teaching was the readiness of God to forgive the penitent. Such is the meaning of the parable of the prodigal son. This doctrine of the forgiveness of sins made a part, and a substantial part, of Christ's teaching; it became a part of the new covenant or dispensation of religion, a part of God's revealed and stipulated way of dealing with men.

In the course of his teaching, Jesus was arraigned by the Jews as guilty of blasphemy in pretending to be their promised Messiah, and for teaching the people in the name of God. They brought him before their highest court, and the high-priest solemnly interrogated him, — "Art thou the Christ?" Here was his whole mission and ministry brought to the test. If he had shrunk from that avowal, there would

have been an end to his mission and his religion. The world at large would never have known that such a person had lived. But he said, "I am," and was sentenced to execution. He shed his blood, then, in bearing testimony to his divine mission; his blood was the *seal* of the new covenant, a part of which covenant was the promise of God to forgive the penitent. This is what he meant, then, in instituting the supper, when he took the cup and said, — "This is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." My blood is the seal of that covenant, which promises the forgiveness of sins. This is the sense in which Jesus was "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." The mere pardon of sin is of little consequence, unless at the same time there is a change of character. It would have been of no use for the father to forgive the prodigal son, unless he had repented. If he had come back impenitent, the state of things would not have been improved at all, though the father *had* forgiven the impenitent son. Christ is the ambassador of God's mercy to men. He pronounced them pardon on repentance, and acceptance on the ground of obedience, — reward even for every good act. But that embassage is made infinitely more impressive by the crucifixion. That Christ foresaw and foretold: — "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

So we find that it is the *moral effect* of Christ's death on which the writers of the New Testament principally dwell, when speaking of the subject. "Who suffered the just for the unjust," — that he might appease the Divine wrath, or vindicate the honor of the law? — no: but "that he might bring us unto God." "Who gave himself for us," — that

he might expiate our sins? — no: but "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed by corruptible things, as silver and gold," — from what? — the wrath of God, the penalties of the law? — no: but "from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers," from your vicious habits and practices, which were handed down from preceding generations, "by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Now there is no possible way in which the blood of Christ can reform men from their evil habits, except by giving moral power and efficacy to the Gospel, in *persuading* men to abandon sin and practise holiness.

Such, then, are the views of Unitarians with respect to the atonement. They do not believe that Christ died to appease God's wrath, they do not believe that he died to satisfy the claims of the broken law. They do believe that he died to give power and efficacy to his Gospel, to fix on him the faith and affections of mankind, that they might be delivered from sin and be induced to become holy, just, and good; to break off their sins by righteousness, and their iniquities by turning to God, and thus become reconciled to that Father from whom they were alienated by wicked works.

The Unitarian hopes to be saved, not by his own merits, nor by the merits of Christ, but by the free, unbought, spontaneous mercy of God, of which boundless and unchangeable love the mission and death of Christ are an expression and a manifestation. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The atonement, or reconciliation, is not so much a speculative as a practical subject, in which every one is interested. Each one knows whether he is reconciled to God, or whether he is estranged from him. Christ has told us how we can find peace. "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

1st Series. No. 251.

THE

TWENTY-THIRD REPORT

OF THE

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,

WITH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING,

May 30, 1848.

BOSTON:
WM. CROSBY AND H. P. NICHOLS.
111 Washington Street.
June, 1848.

Price 5 Cents.

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PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

TWENTY-THIRD ANNIVERSARY.

The Twenty-third Anniversary of the American Unitarian Association was celebrated on Tuesday, May 30th, 1848.

The business meeting was held in the chapel of the Church of the Saviour, the President in the chair. Rev. Dr. Parkman offered prayers. The records of the last annual meeting and of the adjourned meeting were read. The Secretary's report was deferred by vote until the evening meeting. The Treasurer's report was read and accepted. Messrs. Thomas Tarbell and N. A. Barrett were appointed auditors of the same. The President then made a verbal statement regarding the appointment of a General Secretary and an Assistant, the satisfaction of the Executive Committee with the new arrangement, and the successful effort of one of the Vice-Presidents to relieve the Association from debt. A resolution of thanks for this benevolent and successful service to the Association was moved by Rev. Charles Brooks, and voted unanimously.

Messrs. G. W. Warren, G. W. Briggs, and Caleb Stetson were chosen a committee to nominate candidates for the several offices of the Association. They reported the same list as before, only substituting Hon. Albert Fearing for

had declined a reëlection. Hon. Stephen Fairbanks declined the office of first Vice-President, but consented to serve as the second in that office.

A committee was then appointed to collect the votes, and the following gentlemen were chosen.

PRESIDENT.

Rev. Ezra S. Gannett, D. D.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

Rev. Samuel K. Lothrop,
Hon. Stephen Fairbanks.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Rev. James W. Thompson,
Isaiah Bangs, Esq.,
Hon. Albert Fearing, } *Directors.*
Rev. Alonzo Hill,
Rev. Charles Brooks,
Henry P. Fairbanks, Esq., *Treasurer.*
Rev. F. W. Holland, *Secretary.*

At a subsequent meeting of the Executive Committee, Rev. Charles Briggs was appointed to perform the duties of Home Secretary.

Hon. S. Fairbanks moved as an amendment to Art. III. of the By-laws, that for the word "Secretary," a "General Secretary and a Home Secretary" should be substituted.

The additional article proposed by Henry P. Fairbanks, Esq., last year, that "Members of Associations formed as auxiliary to this shall be considered as members of this Association, entitled to attend its meetings and take part by discussion and vote in its proceedings, provided the terms of subscription to such auxiliaries be not less than one dollar

subscription to such auxiliaries be not less than one dollar annually ; but no member of an auxiliary or any annual subscriber shall be entitled to vote at the annual meeting, unless his subscription shall be paid on or before the 1st of May," was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Alger's amendment, proposed last year, creating life-directors by the payment of one hundred dollars to the funds of the Association, was then debated at length, and indefinitely postponed, by a nearly unanimous vote.

The President reported against the expediency of presenting a bound set of our Tracts to every college and theological school, according to the resolution offered by Francis Alger, Esq., — first, because many of our tracts were out of print ; second, because the expense would be beyond our means.

N. A. Barrett, Esq., offered a resolution, that the Executive Committee be requested hereafter to leave the annual meetings perfectly free after the usual introductory services, without engaging any speakers, which was debated at length, and lost.

On motion of G. W. Warren, Esq, it was voted that a circular be sent to every auxiliary, requesting them to appoint several delegates to our next annual meeting. It was then voted, nearly unanimously, that the report of the Secretary be read in future at the commencement of the business meeting of the Association.

The meeting then adjourned to Federal Street Church, at half past seven o'clock, when prayers were offered by Rev. Mr. Cordner of Montreal, the report of the Executive Committee was read and accepted, and an address given by Rev. Dr. Dewey of New York, upon the position and duties of the Unitarian denomination, and, after singing the usual doxology, the Association adjourned *sine die*.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Statement of the Receipts and Expenditures of the American Unitarian Association, from May 25th, 1847, to May 29th, 1848.

RECEIPTS.

Balance in the Treasury, May 25th, 1847, as per account then rendered,		$ 136 45
From Auxiliary Associations and Subscriptions,	$ 1,817 45	
" Donations,	3,152 00	
" Life-members,	240 00	
" Sales of Tracts,	53 27	
" Societies and Individuals, for Missionary and other Purposes,	1,692 03	
" Societies and Individuals, for the relief of Churches needing aid,	225 00	
" Societies and Individuals, for Theological Education, including Meadville School,	314 00	
" Legacy of the late A. W. Fuller, Esq.,	1,000 00	
" Rev. William Adam, Balance of $ 100 paid to him July 21st, 1845,	30 00	
" Interest of Permanent Fund,	1,046 00	9,569 75
		$ 9,706 20

EXPENDITURES.

For Paper, and Printing and Binding Tracts,	$ 921 72	
" Salary of Secretary, (Rev. C. Briggs,) from May 25th, 1847, to January 1st, 1848,	1,102 78	
" Salary of Secretary, (Rev. F. W. Holland,) from January 1st, 1848, 5 months,	416 67	
" Salary of Assistant Secretary, (Rev. C. Briggs,) from Jan. 1st, 1848, 5 months,	208 33	
" Travelling Expenses of Secretaries,	139 80	
Amount carried over,	$ 2,789 30	

Amount brought over,		$2,789 30	
For Expenses of Collection,		59 60	
" Rent of Office, Tract Agency, &c.,		225 00	
" Incidental Expenses, including Interest,		328 51	
" Furniture for Office,		75 25	
			$3,477 66
" Borrowed Money repaid,			2,000 00
" Aid of Unitarian Soc. in Milwaukie,		200 00	
" " " " Washington, D. C.,		50 00	
" " " " Vernon, N. Y.,		50 00	
" " " " Norwich, Ct.,		40 00	
" " " " Windsor, Vt.,		200 00	
" " " " Manchester, N. H.,		200 00	
" " " " Topsham, Me.,		100 00	
" " " " Leverett, Mass.,		50 00	
" " " " Montague, "		50 00	
" " " " Upton "		100 00	
" " " " Lowell, 2d Soc.,		300 00	
" " " " Dennis,		50 00	
" " " " Haverhill,		75 00	
" " Broadway Unitarian Soc., South Boston,		250 00	
" " Rev. Mr. Fisher's Soc., Boston,		125 00	
			1,840 00
For Theological Education.			
To Mr. O. S. Fernald,		60 00	
" " J. H. Phipps,		100 00	
" Meadville School, including Rev. Mr. Stebbins's Salary,		1,107 72	
			1,267 72
For Missionary Services.			
To Rev. Thomas Barr,		100 00	
" " Mr. Boothby,		50 00	
" " W. P. Huntington,		50 00	
" " J. H. Allen,		20 00	
" " J. W. Thompson,		10 00	
" Mr. Geo. G. Channing,		35 37	265 37
Amount carried over,			$8,850 75

Amounts brought over,		$ 8,850 75
To Book and Pamphlet Society,	50 00	
" Rev. H. Snow, for Circulation of Books,	200 00	
" " O. H. Wellington, for Services rendered the Association,	10 00	
		260 00
		$ 9,110 75
Balance,		595 45
		$ 9,706 20

Er. Ex.

H. P. FAIRBANKS, *Treasurer.*

Boston, May 30, 1848.

LIABILITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION.*

The following sums have been appropriated (in part conditionally) and not yet drawn from the Treasury.

For Missionary School at Albion, Mich.,	$ 50 00
" Divinity School at Cambridge,	15 00
" Theological School at Meadville,	90 00
" Rev. Mr. Walworth,	100 00
" Unitarian Society at Hillsboro, Ill.,	50 00
" " " Washington, D. C.,	200 00
" " " Manchester, N. H.,	100 00
" Rev. Mr. Fox's Society at Boston,	100 00
" Benevolent Fraternity of Churches,	50 00
	$ 755 00

Boston, June 3, 1848. The undersigned have examined the foregoing accounts, and find the same to be correctly cast, and properly vouched.

THOMAS TARBELL, }
N. A. BARRETT, } *Auditors.*

* By this list of the liabilities of the Association, it will be perceived that there is a debt of $ 159.55.

TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

Believing that the time has come to modify the action of the Association in correspondence with the progress of the denomination and the new position of this incorporated organization, the Executive Committee desire to use this occasion to consider, first, the purpose for which we are associated; second, the means of realizing that purpose, — our Correspondence, our Auxiliaries, our Tracts, our Missionaries.

The *original purpose* of the Unitarian Association is declared in the Constitution, namely, "to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity throughout our country." Here are manifestly two objects. First, to multiply Unitarians. The name of the society indicates the sense in which the term "pure Christianity" is to be understood. To exhibit and defend this faith, explain its true character, vindicate its Scriptural origin, remove the objections urged against it, and by fair argument win men to its profession, were undoubtedly included by our early friends among the expected results.

But proselytism was not the great purpose for which it was instituted. A mere profession of Unitarianism seemed comparatively unimportant. The chief purpose was to promote the moral and spiritual interests of religion, to place

the Gospel in closer relations to the consciences, hearts, and lives of men, and to give greater efficacy to the Divine truth of which Christianity is at once the most compendious and the most comprehensive statement. Its founders, seeing that their efforts for the spread of Christian knowledge or life, if turned into the customary channels, must become instrumental in the diffusion of error, found that the only manly way was to open a channel through which they could send out the unpolluted waters of salvation. To make men Unitarians was only a second and subsidiary thing to making them Christian in character and life. To enlighten ignorance, convince skepticism, reform the sinful, arouse the careless, to bring Christianity into connection with the societies and souls of men, were the aims most anxiously entertained.

In a just-published letter to Mr. Thatcher, Dr. Channing states our principles in this respect. "There cannot be a doubt," he says, "that had we seriously united for spreading Unitarianism by any and every means, by secret insinuations against those who differ from us, by uncharitable denunciations, and by the usual arts of sects, we might have produced in this part of the country a Unitarian heat of bitterness not inferior to that with which Trinitarianism is too often advocated. But our people will testify how little we have labored to make them partisans, how constantly we have besought them to look with candor on other denominations, and to delight in all the marks others exhibit of piety and goodness. Our great and constant aim has been to spread the *spirit* of Christ, and we have been persuaded that in this way we should most effectually promote the interests of Christian truth."

In this liberal tone of thought we would now pass in re-

view the several methods of action belonging to our Association.

I. Our Correspondence.

This has been increasing rapidly within these few months, and promising to become a powerful instrument of Christian influence, — an instrument not burdened with costliness, nor bounded by distance, nor exhausted by one language, nor confined to any preconceived variety of utterance. There are letters constantly coming in for information upon Unitarianism, desiring to know if we have any publications, and where they may be obtained; if we administer any ordinances, and where they may be enjoyed. Others, again, seek intelligence regarding the purposes and methods of this Association. Others still require Christian counsel, earnest sympathy, a word of good cheer, the knowledge how others have worked their way clear, that they may so fight as to obtain the mastery. Other letters there are, opening promising fields of labor, advising us in the application of funds and the circulation of tracts, pointing out men who should be attracted to the ministry, and pastors who deserve our sympathy and aid through some unusual trial. The lengthy replies which a portion of this correspondence requires are burdensome, especially after the exhaustion of a faithful attendance upon the office; but nothing else answers so entirely the original idea of the American Unitarian Association, and no other mode of effort accomplishes so much at once, so much for us, as well as for the scattered brethren of the same spiritual household. All over our wide land are persons of influence and intelligence, who need only a little light and the expression of fraternal sympathy from an organization like our own, to become

efficient coworkers. The Association should be brought into communion with these dispersed friends, should gather from all parts of the land such contributions of Christian faith and liberality as shall give to our action a deeper tone, and a wider, because a responsive, influence. And this thought is becoming realized as rapidly as possible. The correspondence divided among various persons is gradually pouring into one central stream, and vastly multiplying the labor and extending the efficiency of the office of the Association.

II. Our Auxiliaries.

There are reasons which induce an adherence to this method of sustaining our operations in preference to those which promise more at first, but which act with less regularity and are liable to be abandoned at any moment. It is desirable that every Unitarian congregation, whether large or small, wealthy or poor, self-sustained or dependent in part on foreign aid, should have its auxiliary association in correspondence with this parent society, and that its members should be increased from year to year, while the torpid auxiliaries should be revived, the feeble encouraged, and those that have done well stimulated to do still better.

Every such society should so arrange its annual meeting as to secure an address or addresses appropriate to the occasion, a special meeting of all friendly to our views, the attendance of some members of the Executive Committee, as well as of the General Secretary, and all the impulse, knowledge, direction, and extension which an assembly devoted to this particular object can furnish. Were these meetings appointed on week-evenings, a season much more suitable to the purposes of this Association, and, as experi-

ence has proved, quite as profitable as the Lord's Day, the Secretary would make it a business to attend all such meetings, keep our societies informed of one another's prospects and wants, and supply the Association with that constant and recent intelligence necessary to its profitable action.

This stated annual meeting would also have the effect of preventing the auxiliaries from neglecting our just claims, from suffering their own numbers to dwindle away by death and removal, from allowing our tracts to be piled away unread, and from every other abuse which has attended this instrumentality hitherto. In our two hundred and sixty-seven societies, there are but one hundred and twenty-eight auxiliaries, and of these certainly one half have little more than a name to live. Where the pastor takes a personal interest in the matter, the branch of our vine is sure to flourish and bear abundant fruit. May we not hope that to our only Missionary, our only Tract organization, the clergy will begin to show something of that interest which has augmented the principal societies of the kind among our Orthodox brethren twenty-five per cent. this year?

III. Our Missionaries.

As we can hope for means to send out but few travelling missionaries, it is the more necessary that those few should be of the highest character, — not those who are in want of any thing better to do, nor those whom the parishes at home are weary of hearing, — but men who shall command respect and win confidence by their ability, discretion, and devotion. The policy pursued in former years of sending out settled ministers, while their pulpits were supplied by younger men, deserves our zealous continuance. But

greatly enlarged means are needed so that we may even bear the name of a missionary society. The fund for this purpose, which resulted from a series of meetings held in this city and vicinity five years ago, ceased with the spring of this year; and it is hoped that the Anniversary will not be allowed to pass without some distinct action on a subject of such vital moment. It is the opinion of those laboring in the field to which our attention has been more and more directed, that fifty missionaries could be profitably sent out to the West alone; and that they could not work long before there would be a call for fifty more. In times past, having had to deny so many brethren who desired to go out as missionaries, and having been driven back by want of means from many interesting fields of labor, friends at a distance have frequently acquiesced in it as a settled thing, that they could not obtain Unitarian preaching, no matter how much they desired it. This has led some entire communities to turn away from any Christian ordinances, and is exposing now the future of our country, as well as of our Church, to most serious injury. The patriot as well as the Christian must mourn that the youth of our country, the fresh tide of humanity, should rise up without the conservative yet inspiring influences of our holy faith. Those more vigorous and enterprising minds which so generally demand our views will not find the Christian influences which they need, will not ripen so surely into a virtuous manhood, will not bear the fruit we desire in social culture, business integrity, general purity, and public faith. Is it not time that we abandoned the timid policy of doing as little as possible, of encouraging hardly any new enterprises, of satisfying ourselves with approaching our own achievements in former years, of sending out hardly men

enough to say that we have missionaries? Should our consciences sit easy under such treachery to Christ? Can we claim our descent from those Apostles who made the world their home, who toiled and suffered for the Gentile as well as the Jew, who manifestly expected that the missionary spirit should beam forth from every Christian church until the knowledge of the Lord covered the earth, as the waters cover the sea?

IV. Our Tracts.

We have this year issued, as usual, twelve new tracts, upon stereotype plates, in editions of six thousand each; we have also reprinted six of the thirty-five tracts which had entirely disappeared from the Depository last January. Since then, other vacancies have occurred in our assortment, and the general stock has been so much reduced that two thousand dollars are required to prepare us for the demands of the times. It is mortifying, when money is forwarded hundreds of miles for our own publications, to be obliged to say that we have not a single copy ourselves of some of the best; that it is not possible at present to complete a series for any one, far less to undertake, as was proposed the last year, to supply all our colleges and theological schools with bound sets. A change so entire, from the overstocked Depository of six years ago, seems to argue a new interest taken by some portion of the public in our views. And yet it must be confessed that our controversial tracts have lost their interest in this part of the country, and cannot hope to recover it, no matter by whom they are written. Indeed, when a dozen tracts have been given to some single doctrine, it is but fair to conclude that we have done that doctrine all the justice in our power. The Committee are

making unwearied efforts to obtain a more popular series of narrative and biographical tracts, realizing the suggestion once made by Dr. Channing in these words, — "Would not occasional accounts of virtuous poverty, of high examples of virtue found in common life, be very useful?" — and giving the thought an application as wide as humanity, to wealth just as much as poverty, to unusual experiences as well as the ordinary routine of being. In carrying into effect this partial change in our publications, in enlisting popular female writers in room of theological treatises by clergymen alone, the Executive Committee are only acting out the frequently recorded purposes of their predecessors. The serious obstacle will be, with the small means at our command, to compete at all with the generous offers of the leading journals for the same kind of literature.

The Committee suggest, that it would be desirable to deviate occasionally from the monotony of one tract per month, and issue, when occasion calls, a quarterly volume, containing some entire work like Ware's Formation of Christian Character, or Martineau's Prize Essays, in neat covers, suited for preservation, and worthy of a place at the fireside and in the family library. Some subjects would then receive the thorough discussion which our present limits forbid, an addition of real value might be made to the standard literature of theology, and we should be spared the necessity of ever giving currency to an essay of merely moderate worth. There are subjects, such as Baptism, the Old Testament, the Epistles, Amusement, Sickness, &c., which have not been touched in our twenty-one volumes, and which require a full and fair discussion, once for all.

A new series of four-page tracts, for gratuitous distribution, is intended to appear before long.

Two young clergymen are engaged as colporteurs in the circulation and sale of Channing's works, one under the direction of our Association, the other in connection with the Meadville School. But when we see that another American society, pursuing an object very similar to our own, has employed through part of the year three hundred and ninety-seven travelling book-agents, — when we find, too, how warmly our own messengers have been received, over fifty sets of Channing's works being taken sometimes in a single remote village, — shall we not follow the finger of Providence, and pursue this work on a broad and generous plan, worthy of our means, worthy of our views, worthy of this land of promise, worthy of the humanity we would elevate and redeem? A resolution was adopted last Anniversary to this effect, and there are not a few among us who would be glad to give part of the year to so good a work. It appears to us to be the least objectionable among all the instrumentalities employed by the popular sects, to be created by a manifest necessity, to threaten no interference with individual freedom, to promise to supplant a base and perishable literature by one at once elevating and enduring, and in our hands to receive a far higher application by the character of the works we have offered and are to offer.

So much for the future; for the past, the Secretary of the Association has to report, that in five months' service he has travelled 2,353 miles, visited 56 parishes, addressed 33 and formed and revived 12 auxiliaries, lectured before 15 Sunday schools, and given 66 other addresses.

If, with so considerable an amount of effort, the pecuniary results are still very small, several impediments in our path must be taken into view. And, first, the year has been a broken one; for more than half of it we have been wait-

ing for some one to fill the office and make the addresses of the General Secretary. Second, the missionary fund, which served to swell the sum total of previous years, having nearly ceased, so much is withdrawn from the income of the present year. Third, an unusual number of our societies have been discharging church debts, erecting new houses of worship, or so materially improving the accommodations of the old, that they think themselves honorably released from a fresh effort now. Fourth, several of our country societies have contributed so generously for the purchase of Channing's works, often with a view to gratuitous distribution, that they can only aid us with promises at present. Fifth, our city societies, in other places as well as Boston, have taken so strong hold of the ministry at large as sometimes to evade our appeals altogether. Sixth, during the period when nine tenths of our collections are commonly made, a severe pressure has been experienced in the money-market, and some of our best friends have been disabled from doing what they otherwise would. Last, though the new Secretary has been greatly aided by the knowledge and experience of his predecessor, he has no doubt come very far short of what a longer acquaintance with the work and a larger intimacy with our parishes may enable him to accomplish.

Earnest thanks are due to those Boston friends who came forward at the urgency of one of our most devoted laymen, a member of the Executive Committee, and honorably released us from a burden of nearly three thousand dollars of debt.

Our receipts have been $ 9,706.20; our expenditures, including appropriations not yet paid, $ 9,865.75.

It is refreshing to offset this comparative failure in pecuniary results with the fact, that our churches here and away were never so numerous, never so prosperous, before.

From his recent visits to fifty-six parishes, the Secretary has obtained ocular demonstration that our societies are very generally growing in numbers, in zeal, in public esteem, it may be hoped in spiritual life. Hardly any other denomination could boast so great a proportion of churches throwing off every burden, renewing the sanctuary in costly and elegant form, and furnishing religion every outward means of clothing its word with power. In the latter our tendency is to excess; and there have sometimes been reasons for regretting that a generous people have expended that amount in erecting a single edifice which might have furnished four comfortable houses where they were equally needed. But we certainly have no cause to mourn over decay, when hardly such a thing can be found in our Israel as an unpainted, comfortless, forlorn, deserted, and dishonored house of God; when, on the other hand, a score of societies regarded as good as dead have started afresh, have outdone their own expectations, and present noble examples of successful effort to the older societies around them. Such results do not figure in our Treasurer's report, they are known only by detached fragments to any one, they make no show in the streets; and yet these genuine and permanent revivals are a far greater test of the strength of Unitarianism than the erection of new churches, or the conversion of those of other denominations to our use. In the whole experience of Christianity, nothing is more difficult, and certainly nothing more praiseworthy, than for a self-abandoned society to shake off its lethargy, strain every nerve to recover its forfeited position, and give blessed evidence of a renewed and constantly renewing vitality. The action of this Association has repeatedly in the past year induced societies to make successful efforts

for their emancipation from debt, by giving them assistance only on condition that they first assisted themselves. Our friends in Manchester, N. H., state that they have greatly enlarged their Sunday School library, fitted their church for evening, as well as day service, discharged every liability, vastly increased their audiences, and multiplied their Sunday scholars sevenfold. Much of this change from almost despair is due to the counsel and encouragement of the former General Secretary. The Church of the Divine Unity in New York, a subject of considerable anxiety for some time, has by a noble and united effort put itself beyond any fear for the future. The societies at Stow, Haverhill, and Lexington have found the calamity which swept away their pleasant sanctuaries blest, in the energy it prompted and the united effort it compelled. Our distant societies, like Elgin, Chicago, St. Louis, Syracuse, Washington, were never so prosperous before. East Boston, Athol, Hopkinton, Ware, Warwick, and Northumberland, Pa., deserve similar mention. The reports from Montreal are exceedingly encouraging. Toronto and Albany are sustaining themselves by lay services, preparatory to a renewed effort by and by. From all parts of the land, and from our personal experience, we find that the desire for information regarding our views was never so great as at this moment, nor the duty of promoting religious inquiry so manifestly pressed upon us by Him who bids us "work while it is day."

We are partakers in a noble enterprise, that of circulating the six-volume edition of Dr. Channing's works at a price so low as to put them within the reach of nearly every household, and yet in such attractive form as to win general favor. About nine thousand sets have been already welcomed by the wise zeal of our clergy and the generous

sympathy of our churches, large numbers have been sent out West, hundreds of clergymen have been gratuitously supplied, and every college and every theological school is now offered a copy without money and without price. A new edition of three thousand was taken up as soon as it appeared, and still another is in active preparation. The eighteen thousand volumes just sent forth correspond to a tract-circulation of 900,000 of our ordinary tracts, or two millions and a quarter of the four-page tracts of the American Tract Society. The eagerness with which this edition has been received, and the wide circulation it is enjoying, are most encouraging signs of the times, — are promise of a glorious harvest yet to be reaped in fields so well sown, — are satisfactory evidence of the increasing interest taken in our views all over the land.

The desire has been frequently expressed, that a similar circulation should be given to the works of Henry Ware, jr., whose Gospel simplicity of style and unction of address seem deserving to be known, as they are not known, by the millions of our countrymen. Future generations would rejoice over such an abiding impulse given to the cause of pure morals, Christian charity, and fervid piety; the after history of our nation might be somewhat changed by the widespread teachings of so true a heart, so life-giving a soul. We trust that another Autumnal Convention will not come and go without some step towards so noble a result.

From England we learn, by a late letter of that true apostle, Joseph Barker, that "in the circle in which he moves, Unitarian doctrines are making their way and have been making their way for years past. I have not the least doubt," he adds, "that, amongst the people whom I have had the opportunity of addressing, and amongst whom my

publications have been circulated, not less than from thirty to forty thousand people have embraced Unitarianism within the last five years. If those who hold Unitarian sentiments would use their influence as they ought in multiplying and circulating plain, popular, and truthful publications, they would see their sentiments prevailing in every class of society and every part of the world."

The entire success of the ministry at large is a very marked feature in our intelligence from abroad; a new chapel has just been consecrated to its service in London, and this idea, which sprang up in our Association with its birth, seems gaining general favor in the mother land. We find that a new college called University Hall has just been established in London, by the contributions of our brethren, to prepare academical students for graduation at the London University. From the speeches of Drs. Andrews and Montgomery, at a late meeting in Belfast, we should judge that our cause in Ireland was making a healthy and honorable progress.

On the Continent, two facts claim notice. The celebrated Unitarian preacher, M. Coquerel, has been elected a member of the National Assembly now in session, and is classed among the prominent men of the moderate party; while a somewhat singular movement in Geneva, one we cannot wholly regret, placed our brethren, the venerable company of pastors, at the mercy of a radical political party, which may disturb their influence and arrest their labors. It is, however, in no sense a theological movement; it is simply a longing for some larger liberty, and impatience at the antiquated authority of the Genevese clergy; it subjects the churches to a ministry elected, we might almost say, by the people at large, designated in fact by a body in which the

laity, chosen without regard to religious character, hold the sway of four to one of the clergy.

Since our last Anniversary, the Association has had several losses to mourn; among others, the sudden decease of one of its earliest, heartiest friends,* whose exceedingly practical mind saw at a glance the capacity of this organization in its infancy for a vast good to humanity as well as Christianity, whose wisely liberal spirit saw in our success the doom set upon exclusionism and bigotry, whose earnest labors as General Secretary gave us much of our standing with the churches, whose glowing heart beat in closest sympathy with us till it was so unexpectedly summoned to its rest and its reward.

But as one after another of our faithful helpers pass to their account, shall not that progress-spirit which characterizes our views prompt us to press on with renewed zeal, seeing the night cometh wherein no man can work? May we not hope that the partakers in another Anniversary will feel that the opportunities of doing good upon earth are passing away never to return, opportunities at present so negligently used or so grossly neglected? — that not many more gatherings at our annual festival, and they too may be looking from the world of spirits upon the ripened harvest whose laborers are so few? May there be no vain regrets for buried talents rising up with us in the resurrection, no unavailing penitence for a neglected stewardship; but, faithful to our country, faithful to our Church, faithful to humanity, faithful to the love and life of Christ, may the past indeed be blessed, the future glorious!

* Rev. Jason Whitman.

ACT OF INCORPORATION.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

In the year one thousand eight hundred and forty-seven.

An Act to incorporate the American Unitarian Association.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows: — Section 1. Charles Briggs, Samuel K. Lothrop, Henry P. Fairbanks, their associates and successors, are hereby made a corporation, by the name of the American Unitarian Association, with all the powers and privileges, and subject to all the duties, liabilities, and restrictions, set forth in the forty-fourth chapter of the Revised Statutes; and said corporation may hold real and personal estate to the value of fifty thousand dollars, to be devoted exclusively to the promotion of the interests of moral and religious instruction. Section 2. All donations, devises, and bequests of real and personal estate, which may heretofore have been made to the American Unitarian Association, or to the Executive Committee thereof, shall be and inure to the use and benefit of the corporation hereby created, to be appropriated, however, to the purposes designated in any such donation, devise, or bequest. Section 3. This Act shall take effect from and after its passage.

House of Representatives, March 3d, 1847, passed to be enacted.

EBEN BRADBURY, *Speaker.*

In Senate, March 4, 1847, passed to be enacted.

W. B. CALHOUN, *President.*

March 4th, 1847. Approved.

EO. N. BRIGGS.

Secretary's Office, March 5, 1847.

certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the original Act.

JOHN G. PALFREY,
Secretary of the Commonwealth.

BY-LAWS.

ARTICLE 1. The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure

Christianity throughout our country; and all Unitarian Christians in the United States shall be invited to unite and coöperate with it for that purpose.

Art. 2. An annual subscription of one dollar shall constitute a person a member so long as such subscription be paid, and a subscription of thirty dollars shall constitute a person a member for life.

Art. 3. The officers shall be a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and five Directors, two of whom, at least, shall be laymen. These officers shall be chosen by ballot, at the annual meeting, and shall hold their offices for one year, or till others be chosen in their stead.

Art. 4. These officers shall constitute an Executive Committee, who shall meet at least once in each month, and shall have charge of all the business and interests of the Association, the direction of its funds and operations, with power to fill any vacancies that may occur in their number between any two annual meetings, and to call special meetings of the corporation whenever they shall deem it necessary or expedient.

Art. 5. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep a full record of the meetings of the corporation, and of the Executive Committee; to conduct the correspondence of the Association and keep an accurately arranged file of the same; and in general to perform such services, to suggest, devise, and execute, under the direction of the Executive Committee, such plans and measures, as shall, in their judgment, tend to promote the objects of the Association, increase its usefulness, and enlarge the sphere of its influence; and his salary shall be determined by vote of the corporation at the annual meeting.

Art. 6. The annual meeting of the Association shall be held on the Tuesday before the last Wednesday in May, at nine o'clock, A. M., at such place in the city of Boston as the Executive Committee may appoint, of which due notice shall be given by advertisement in two or more newspapers published in Boston at least ten days previous.

Art. 7. Any amendment of these articles, proposed at one annual meeting, may be adopted at the next, if a majority of the members present vote in favor of it.

CLERGYMEN MEMBERS FOR LIFE.

The following clergymen have been made members for life of the Association, by the donation of thirty dollars or more, principally from ladies of their respective societies.

Abbot, Abiel
Adams, E. G.
Alden, Seth
Alger, Horatio
Alger, W. R.
Allen, Joseph
Allen, Joseph H.
Allen, T. Prentiss
* Andrews, William
Arnold, A. C. L.
* Bancroft, Aaron, D. D.
Barrett, Samuel
Barry, William
Bartlett, John
* Bascom, Ezekiel L.
Bates, Reuben
Bellows, Henry W.
Bigelow, Andrew, D. D.
* Brazer, John, D. D.
Briggs, Charles
Brigham, Charles H.
Brooks, Charles
Brooks, Charles T.
Brown, Addison
Buckingham, Edgar
Burnap, George W.
Burton, Warren
Chandler, Seth
* Channing, William E., D. D.
Clark, Amos
Clarke, Samuel
Cole, Jonathan
Colman, Henry
Coolidge, J. I. T.
Cordner, John
Crafts, E. P.
Crosby, J.
Cunningham, Francis
Cutler, Curtis
* Damon, David
Dewey, Orville, D. D.
Doggett, Theophilus P.
* Edes, Edward H.
Edes, Henry, D. D.
Edes, Henry F.
Ellis, George E.
Emmons, Henry
Everett, O. C.
Farley, Frederick A.
Field, Joseph, D. D.
* Flint, Jacob
Flint, James, D. D.
Fosdick, David
Fox, Thomas B.
Frost, Barzillai
Frothingham, William
Furness, William H.
Gage, Nathaniel

* Dead.

Gannett, Ezra S., D. D.
Gannett, Thomas B.
Gray, Frederick T.
Greene, William B.
* Greenwood, F. W. P., D. D.
Hall, Edward B.
Hall, Nathaniel
Hamilton, Luther
Harrington, Joseph, Jr.
Hedge, F. H.
Hill, Alonzo
Holland, F. W.
Hosmer, George W.
Howe, Moses
Huntington, Frederick D.
Huntoon, Benjamin
Ingersoll, George G., D. D.
Johnson, Rufus A.
Judd, Sylvester
Kendall, James, D. D.
Lambert, Henry
Lamson, Alvan, D. D.
Lincoln, Calvin
* Little, Robert
Livermore, A. A.
Loring, Bailey
Lothrop, Samuel K.
Lunt, William P.
May, Samuel, Jr.
Merrick, J. M.
Miles, Henry A.
Moore, Josiah
Morse, William
Motte, Mellish I.
Muzzey, Artemas B.
Newell, William
Nichols, Ichabod, D. D.
Nightingale, Crawford
Noyes, George R., D. D.
Nute, Ephraim
Osgood, Joseph
Osgood, Peter
Osgood, Samuel
Palfrey, John G., D. D.
* Parker, Nathan, D. D.
Parker, Theodore
Parkman, Francis, D. D.
Parkman, John
* Peabody, O. W. B.
* Peabody, William B. O., D. D.
* Phipps, H. G. O.
Pierpont, John
Pike, Richard
Putnam, George, D. D.
Reynolds, G.
Richardson, Joseph
* Ripley, Ezra, D. D.
Ripley, George
* Ripley, Samuel
Robbins, Chandler
Robbins, Samuel D.
Robinson, Charles
* Rogers, T. F.
Sanger, Ralph
Sargent, J. T.
Sears, E. H.
Sewall, Charles C.
Sewall, Edmund Q.
Shackford, C. C.
Simmons, George F.
Smith, Amos
Smith, J. C.
Stearns, Oliver
Stebbins, Rufus P.
Stetson, Caleb
* Storer, John P. B.

Sullivan, Thomas R.
Sweet, John D.
* Swett, William G.
Thayer, Christopher T.
* Thayer, Nathaniel, D. D.
Thompson, James, D. D.
Thompson, James W.
Waite, Josiah K.
Walker, James, D. D.
* Ware, Henry, Jr., D. D.
Ware, William
Weiss, John
Wellington, Charles
* Wells, George W.
Wheeler, A. D.
White, John
White, William H.
* Whitman, Bernard
* Whitman, Jason
Whitman, Nathaniel
Whitney, F. A.
Whitwell, William A.
Williams, George A.
Willis, Martin W.
Wilson, E. B.
Withington, Hiram
Young, Alexander, D. D.

OTHER MEMBERS FOR LIFE.

Abbot, Ezra
Abbot, Harris
Abbot, Samuel
Abbott, Miss Abigail
Adams, Benjamin T.
Adams, James, Jr.
Adams, Philip
Adams, Zabdiel B.
Alger, Cyrus
Alger, Francis
Ames, David W.
Ames, Mrs. David
Ames, Seth
Andrews, Ebenezer T.
Anthony, Edwar
Aspinwall, Samuel
Atherton, Charles H.
Appleton, Charles T.
Appleton, Francis
Appleton, J. R.
Appleton, Nathan
Appleton, Samuel
Baker, Henry F.
Ball, S. S.
Bancroft, Mrs. B. D.
Bangs, Isaiah
Barker, Joseph A.
Barrett, Nathaniel A.
Bigelow, Alanson
Bigelow, John
* Bird, John H.
Bixby, Miss Keziah
* Blake, Mrs. Sarah
Blanchard, Hezekiah

Bliss, Theodore
* Bond, George
Bond, George W.
* Bowditch, Nathaniel
Bowles, Samuel
Boyd, Francis
Brackett, Samuel E.
* Bradlee, Joseph P.
Brewster, Oliver
Brewster, William
Brooks, Peter C.
Brown, Mrs. Amy T.
Carew, Joseph
Cartwright, Charles W.
Chapin, Harvey
Chapman, Mrs. Jonathan
Chapman, Mrs. Margaret
* Child, Richards
Child, Mrs. Richards
Clapp, Miss Catharine
* Clapp, Joshua
Clapp, Mrs. Mary
Clarke, Mrs. Sarah
Cobb, Elijah
Coffin, George W.
Colton, George
Cooke, Mrs. Mary F.
* Coolidge, Joseph
* Cotton, John
Cotton, Joseph, Jr.
Crocker, George A.
Crocker, James H.
Crosby, William
Cushing, T. P.
Cushman, Henry W.
Dale, Samuel H.
Dana, Dexter
Danforth, Isaac
Dascomb, Thomas R.
Davis, Charles S.
Davis, James
Davis, James, Jr.
Davis, Joseph
Davis, J. Amory
Denny, Daniel
Dix, Miss D.
Dorr, John
* Dorr, Samuel
Draper, James
Dwight, George
Dwight, Jonathan
Dwight, Mrs. Mary
Dwight, William
Eager, William
Edwards, Elisha
* Ellis, David
Ellis, Jonathan, Jr.
Emerson, George B.
Emmons, John L.
Everett, Miss Eliza G.
* Everett, Moses, Esq.
Everett, Otis
Fairbanks, Henry P.
Fairbanks, Stephen
Farley, Mrs. Frederick A.
Fearing, Albert
Fisher, Joshua
* Fitch, Jeremiah
Foot, Homer
Foster, Charles A.
Foster, Charles W.
Fowle, C. S.
Fowler, James
Francis, Ebenezer
Frost, George
Gardner, John

Gardner, John L.
Gassett, Henry
Gould, Benjamin A.
Gould, Mrs. Elizabeth
Gould, Lewis
Grant, Moses
* Gray, Harrison
Gray, John C.
* Green, Ezra
* Hall, Mrs. Edward B.
Hall, Jacob
Hall, Sarah B.
Hammond, Daniel
* Hammond, Samuel
Hawes, Prince
Heath, Charles
* Hedge, Barnabas
Hendee, Charles J.
Hewes, Abraham, Jr.
Hewett, H. N.
Hickling, Charles
Hoar, Samuel
Hodges, George
Holbrook, Ann B.
Holland, Mrs. F. W.
Holmes, Benjamin
Howard, Abraham
Howard, Charles
Howard, John
Howe, Gilbert H.
Howe, John
Howe, Zadock
Hull, Henry
Hunt, Nathaniel P.
Inches, Henderson
Inches, Miss
Jackson, Charles
Jackson, Francis
Jarvis, Mrs. Leonard
Jernegan, Mrs. Mary
Johnson, James
* Johnson, Milton
Jones, Miss Charlotte
Jones, Mrs. J. C.
King, Daniel P.
* King, Gedney
King, Samuel B.
Knight, William H.
Kuhn, George H.
Lamson, Benjamin
Lamson, Mrs. F. T.
Lamson, John
Lane, George
Lawrence, Abbo
Lawrence, Amos
* Lawrence, Luther
Lawrence, William
Lewis, S. S.
Lewis, Mrs. S. S.
Lincoln, M. S.
Lincoln, Oliver
Livermore, George
Livermore, Isaac
Lombard, Ammi C.
Lord, George
Lord, Ivory
Lord, Mrs. Sarah C.
Loring, J.
* Loring, William J.
Low, A. A., Esq.
Low, Francis
Low, John J.
Low, Mrs. Rachel
Lowell, John A.
Manley, Mrs. Abigail
Manley, John R.

Manley, Miss Mary
Manning, Mrs. Elizabeth
* Marsh, Ephraim
* May, Joseph
May, Samuel
Mellen, Michael
* Metcalf, E. W.
Miles, Mrs. Henry A
Morgan, Charles W.
Morton, Ichabod
* Munson, Israel
Newell, J. R.
Newman, Henry
Newman, Miss Margaret
Newman, Miss Mary
* Nichols, Charles C.
Nichols, Miss C. K.
Olmsted, Charles H.
Orne, William W.
Osborn, Kendall
Osgood, Isaac
Otis, Harrison G.
Owen, John
Parker, Daniel P.
Parkman, George
* Parkman, Mrs. Sarah
* Parsons, Thomas
* Parsons, William
* Peabody, Joseph
* Peabody, Mrs. W. B. O.
* Peele, Willard
Perkins, Francis
Perkins, Thomas H.
Pettes, Henry
* Phillips, Mrs. John
Phillips, Jonathan
Phillips, Stephen C.
* Pickman, Dudley L.
* Pickman, T. Benjamin
Pierce, John B.
Pierce, S.
Pray, Lewis G.
Preble, William P.
Prentiss, John
Prescott, Oliver
* Prescott, William
Putnam, Mrs. George
Putnam, Philemon
Quincy, Josiah, Jr.
Rantoul, Robert
Read, James
Rhoades, Stephen
Rice, Henry
Richardson, James B.
Roberts, Amos M.
Rogers, John
Rogers, John Gray
Russell, John B.
Russell, Nathaniel
Salisbury, Samuel
Saunders, Mrs. Elizabeth
Savage, James
Sawyer, Samuel, 2d
Seaver, Benjamin
* Seaver, Charles
Seaver, George
Sewall, Mrs. Amy P
Sewall, Daniel
Shaw, Francis G.
Shaw, Lemuel
Shaw, Robert G.
Shaw, W. C.
Shove, Jonathan
Smith, Mrs. D.
Smith, Joseph M.
Smith, Melancthon

Southwick, Philip R.
Sprague, Noah P.
* Stanton, Francis
Stearns, Henry
Stebbins, Festus
Stephens, Nathan
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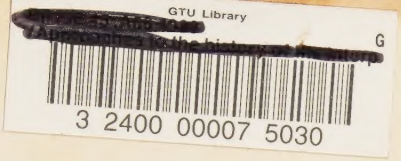

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